

‘Unsettling Space: Trauma and Architecture in Contemporary Art’

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Abstract

This thesis is an inquiry into relationships between concepts of trauma and architectural forms and spaces in contemporary art. Through critical analyses of a selection of the sculptural and site-specific works of four key artists - Krzysztof Wodiczko, Rachel Whiteread, Doris Salcedo and Gregor Schneider - it argues that architectural form and space provides a rich material and metaphorical framework for exploring the shifting conceptual terrain of contemporary trauma. Where the representational problem of trauma has traditionally been theorised in relation to subjective experience and the failures of language, the thesis suggests that through their engagement with architecture, all four artists present it as a problem of space and social relations. It argues that these artists utilise architectural form and space as a medium for exploring contemporary anxieties about trauma and its continued effect on both our political and personal lives and our experience and memory of past and present events.

The thesis is structured in three chapters that analyse meanings of trauma in the selected works along a trajectory of different approaches to domestic, institutional, and public architectural sites and spaces. It suggests that through the sculptural strategies of displacement and the blurring of structural boundaries between interior/exterior space, the works straddle the traditional, psychologised space of private, individual experience and a broader, more political space that encompasses collective experience and public forms of commemoration and inhabitation. As such, the thesis argues that problematizing the experience of inhabitation across these spaces is an aesthetic and political strategy that has the power to unsettle the viewer and initiate affective engagements with some of the more ethical dimensions of trauma and our collective response to it in contemporary contexts. By identifying conceptual links between the works of Wodiczko, Whiteread, Salcedo and Schneider, the thesis develops a critical framework for theorising how the unsettled parameters of architectural spaces and forms can foster new approaches to trauma.

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Introduction

Trauma, art and architecture

Since the early twentieth century when modernism relinquished the idea that trauma could be ‘successfully incorporated as part of a narrative’ (Saltzman and Rosenberg 2006: x), the concept of trauma has undergone something of a revolution. Theorised first in the psychoanalysis of Jean-Martin Charcot and Sigmund Freud as a fragmenting and destabilizing experience for the human subject¹, it began to be scrutinized after the second world war in a range of contexts gathering theoretical momentum around major historical events such the Holocaust, the Vietnam War or most recently in the West, the terrorist bombings of 9/11. In recent inquiries, and largely under the influence of post-colonial and post-structuralist theories, interest in trauma has found new foci on questions relating to its impact in non-Western societies, its meanings beyond the dominant contexts of war and memory and how we might understand it as a chronic and ongoing condition in different social contexts. Such a broadening has occurred under the influence of a number of different factors including new media technologies that relay images and narratives of trauma to a global audience on a daily basis, the increasing recognition of trauma’s impact in the fields of law and mental health and challenges to Eurocentric writings of history and subjectivity across the disciplinary spectrum. These changes have brought a new set of challenges to how we perceive and respond to the now ubiquitous presence of trauma in contemporary cultures, and the ethical obligations we bear to the suffering of others. On a global scale, they have generated an increased awareness of the vulnerability of our social and physical relationships, or as Judith Butler puts it ‘the geopolitical distribution of our corporeal vulnerability’ (2004: 29).

¹ Charcot’s late nineteenth century theories of hysteria established the ground for a theory of trauma that related it to the impact of unbearable experiences which gave rise to a range of dissociative behaviours. Based on observations of female patients at the Salpêtrière Hospital, his theories were later developed by Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer, around concepts of a split in consciousness, ruptured cognition and repression. These concepts form the basis of traditional psychological theories that understand trauma as a fragmenting experience both at the moment of impact and its subsequent effects. For an overview of early theories see Ringel and Brandell 2012.

This thesis explores a selection of sculptural and site-specific works² by four key contemporary artists - Krzysztof Wodiczko, Rachel Whiteread, Doris Salcedo and Gregor Schneider – which, I suggest can be located within this new conceptual field of trauma and offer a number of different approaches to the questions raised by trauma's presence in our contemporary world. I argue that through their engagement with different architectural forms and spaces, their works ask viewers to negotiate traumatic effects through spatial frameworks that problematize or 'unsettle' the experience of inhabitation and the ways in which we perceive the meaning and function of particular architectural spaces. Whilst by no means an exhaustive selection of artists whose work references both architecture and trauma³, my choice of these four artists is guided by their engagement with a concept of trauma that appears to straddle, and often confuse the traditional, psychologised space of private, individual experience and a broader, more political space that encompasses a collective, public awareness of trauma and its impact on social relations. I argue that whilst the architectural scale and structural dynamics of the works allow us to consider the breadth of trauma's impact, they also unsettle our access to key experiences of architecture associated with shelter, protection, comfort or cohesion, or in the broadest sense, a fundamentally human space. Through spatial strategies that displace or render the viewer's position precarious, I suggest all four artists ask us to negotiate the vulnerabilities and problems invoked by contemporary trauma through the challenge of inhabiting profoundly unsettling spaces.

Trauma: A shifting paradigm

In recent inquiries, the theoretical terrain of trauma has expanded from its roots in Freudian psychology and psychoanalysis and the aetiology of individual response (Leys, 2000; Caruth 1996; LaCapra 1994; van Alphen 1999) to a broader contextual platform where it defines a range of experiences within postmodern culture and contextualises 'a host of painful realities, both man-made and natural' (Jarzombek 2006: 250). Key areas of this new platform relate to: the legal and medical

² The selected works are: Rachel Whiteread's *Ghost* (1990), *Holocaust Memorial a.k.a Nameless Library* (2000) and *Untitled (Room 101)* (2003); Gregor Schneider's *Haus u r* and *Totes Haus u r* (1985-) and *Weisse Folter* (2007); Doris Salcedo's *Shibboleth* (2007), *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002) and *Eighth Istanbul Biennale* installation (2003); Krzysztof Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999), *Bunker Hill Monument, Boston* (1998), *Tijuana Projection* (2001) and *If You See Something...* (2005).

³ Other contemporary sculptors whose works reference trauma and architecture include Seth Wulsin, Santiago Sierra and Anselm Kiefer.

identification of post-traumatic stress disorders and a new ethics informing our approach to experiences of abuse (Jarzombek 2006; Luckhurst 2008); the politics and aesthetics of representing trauma in the domains of visual art, media and public culture (van Alphen 1997; Bennett 2005, 2012; Foster 1996; Saltzman and Rosenberg 2006; Kaplan 2005; Guerin and Hallas 2007); practices of public memory and commemoration and challenges to the dominance of the Holocaust as master-signifier of trauma (Antze and Lambek 1996; Huyssen 2003; Wodiczko 2009); and a retheorisation of contemporary social relations and concepts of the 'Other' in non-Western or global contexts (Bennett and Kennedy 2003; Butler 2004; Traverso and Broderick 2010).

These new contexts have an intensified focus on the practices and spaces of public life, in particular the collapsing of private and public registers and a broadening of interest from interpersonal relations to political or social concerns. Mark Seltzer suggests such expansion within the 'psycho-social' realm is the product of an 'excruciated crossing', through which

the notion of trauma has come to function not merely as a sort of switch point between bodily and psychic orders; it has beyond that come to function as a switch point between individual and collective, private and public order of things. (1997: 5)

Whilst trauma itself is understood to be a, if not *the* condition of modernity by some commentators (Saltzman and Rosenberg 2006; Vidler 2001) its recent expansion into what Roger Luckhurst terms the 'trauma paradigm' (2008: 1) has, in visual culture placed particular emphasis on questions relating to visibility and witnessing and collective experiences of loss and survival within global or transnational contexts. Part of these effects, Mark Jarzombek argues has been a reinscription of trauma beyond the domain of the psychological, such that it is no longer just 'a circumscribed medical or theoretical condition. "Trauma" is now a historical modifier inventing and promoting a cultural, legal and political territory all of its own' (2006: 260). This new territory has produced a broad-scale and persistent effort to address the representational and political problems of trauma in a world which seems increasingly faced with 'post-traumatic' questions of how to align the different

interests of each domain and address trauma's demands for ethical responsibility from governments and individuals alike.

All the works selected for discussion in this thesis have emerged since 1990 and can be located within this complex field of relations. Although the artists do not necessarily share similar approaches to trauma nor can their works be grouped under a particular theme of trauma (such as memory or post-memory) or always related to specific historical events, (the Holocaust for example), I suggest that what binds them to trauma is their affective power to unsettle the viewer and provoke experiences of uncertainty, vulnerability or anxiety. In line with the more traditional concepts of trauma, I relate some of the affective power of the works to a trajectory of modern concepts that identifies the unsettling nature of trauma with a failure within the subject to make sense of the traumatic event as it occurs and a subsequent haunting or troubling of the subject by unresolved or 'un-representable' elements of the experience (Caruth 1996; LaCapra 1994; Leys 2000; van Alphen 1999). Ernst van Alphen explains, the problem of trauma

is not the nature of the event, nor an intrinsic limitation of representation; rather, it is the split between the living of an event and the available forms of representation with/in which the event can be experienced. (1999: 27)

I suggest the challenges of physically inhabiting the works may be aligned with this split between representation and experience and trauma's rupturing of the subject's psychological ability to record and subsequently recount their experience via any symbolic system. The effects of blurring interior/exterior spaces or problematizing spatial borders and thresholds in the works evokes the split between the 'living of the event' and the failure of representation. Where the representational problem, or 'aporia' of trauma that identifies it as 'unrepresentable' in these theories has been conceived in relation to narrative or language, I suggest that through their engagement with architectural forms, these artists present it as a problem of space 'in which the known (is) made visible but, at the same time, negated, or offered up as unknowable' (Saltzman and Rosenberg 2006: x). My discussion thus suggests that the spatial experience offered by the works may be related broadly to the instability of representation within traumatic experiences. As not all the works can be related

directly to an historic event, my interest in their traumatic force is concerned with how their spatial and material effects may unsettle the viewer's experience of the work, and how this may then relate to trauma's own troubled relationship with representation. My analysis of the architectural spaces of the works is thus focused more on the problem of experience at the heart of trauma theory, and less on what the works may tell us about the histories of specific events or sites.

A common theme in the literature on the selected works is the reporting of unsettling psychological or physical experiences in viewing them. From this the common elements of trauma that allow me to approach them as a group are: concepts of uncertainty and vulnerability which each artist explores through spatial disorientation and the confusion of internal/external boundaries; concepts of haunting or traumatic memory explored through strategies of formal and/or spatial displacement, repetition and fragmentation; the evocation of loss or absence through material traces; and a conflation of private/public boundaries, and past and present experience. Key questions informing my analysis of the works relate to how we may expand our understanding of trauma from paradigms of individual response, to include the impact of social relations and a more complex theorisation of the boundary between individual and collective experiences. As such I suggest these works are part of a growing reinterpretation of trauma that recognises the need to configure it as a condition of our times and in ways that, as Roann Barris suggests, does not rely on prior knowledge within the individual viewer or on the structure of past events (see Barris 2008:6). Mieke Bal (2010) suggests that, in part, this move towards a broader contextual platform reflects the recognition of the continuing relevance of Theodor Adorno's much debated comment 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric' (1967: 19), in a world where far from restricting the potential for trauma or reconfiguring its representation, the presence of trauma has in fact reached a kind of saturation point. She writes,

in one devastating sweep (Adorno described) the permanent state of war the world is in and which we are only now beginning to notice; the role of the media in obliterating this state from perception; and the financial interests of global proportions that sustain that war and even make it indispensable. (2010: 64)

In light of what Bal suggests is a kind of blind spot within our current perception of trauma in the West, I suggest that the architectural dimensions of the works not only offer a formal breadth in which we might grasp the proportions of the devastating consequences of trauma, but a framework that unsettles the material conditions of our own presence in the world. By evoking uncertainty about our own inhabitation of the work and a sense of loss about a former inhabitant or absent 'Other', I suggest the works ask us to negotiate the affective range of trauma across unsettled boundaries of inside and outside space, and subjective and collective experience. Jill Bennett suggests such a negotiation relates directly to trauma as it 'is never unproblematically "subjective"; neither "inside" nor "outside," it is always lived and negotiated at an intersection' (2005:12). As such I suggest that through inhabitation, the works invite us to encounter what Doris Salcedo identifies as the unsettled ground of experience itself, as she explains its etymology;

'Experience' comes from the Latin word *experiri* which means 'to test', 'to prove', from the Latin word *periculum* which means 'peril', 'danger', and also from the European root *per* which means 'going across'. So, experience means 'going across danger'. So my work is about somebody else's experience literally defined. (Salcedo in Sollins 2008).

In addition to the way in which trauma has been conceived as a disruptive or invasive force that brings the past into the present, or as Foster theorises it in the Lacanian framework, the 'return of the real' (Foster 1996) I suggest Salcedo's concept of 'going across danger' lends a spatial dimension to the negotiation of trauma's affective power in the works. My approach thus considers how 'experiencing' their architectural dimensions involves a danger that, by implicating spatial and bodily experience in the question of representing trauma, has the potential to expose our corporeal and psychological vulnerabilities. At a theoretical level the affective range of the works may be aligned with what Barris identifies as

an uncanny moment of knowing what one does not know or want to know. Neither symbolic nor hermetic, these will be spaces which evoke patterns of movement, thought and feeling without producing or relying on the visitor's memory or direct, personal experience of trauma. (2008:6)

By foregrounding the necessity of inhabiting space and negotiating dangerous 'patterns of movement, thought and feeling' (op.cit) I suggest the architectural works of these four artists attempt to reconfigure the boundaries upon which the affective power of trauma may be experienced.

Architecture: Unsettled foundations

Although all the works share common themes such as the traumatic effects of haunting and displacement, the hidden spaces of the unconscious and the unrepresentable, and concepts of loss and absence, my particular interest is on how their architectural dynamics open a space where these aspects are linked to the socio-political realm. My specific concern is focused on how each artist's engagement with architecture expands the field of trauma beyond the psychological concepts of 'repression, spectres, and a present repetitively haunted by a past' (Huyssen 2003: 16) and mobilises a socio-political platform in which such concepts occupy boundaries between private and public space, individual and collective experience. As such, my discussion throughout the thesis is focused on how the formal and spatial dynamics of architecture may provide access to what Jill Bennett terms the 'extrasubjective' space of trauma, that 'by giving trauma extension in space or lived *place*...invites an awareness of different modes of inhabitation' (2005:12). In light of this, my discussion considers how the works generate a new way of accessing the extrasubjective space of trauma, but also how they never fully resolve this access or let us lose sight of the traumatised subject. By evoking a lost or absent inhabitant through the trope of haunting and material 'traces' evidenced in their architectural spaces, I contend the works' socio-political effects can be related to the exposure of the boundary between self/other as itself deeply unsettled. As such, I argue their power to engage with questions of social or political trauma results from unsettling the contained spaces of the artwork or gallery, and asking the viewer to occupy a broader, public space in which our relation to others is exposed as vulnerable.

Isolating the architectural works from each artist's body of work involves distinguishing them from their other sculptural or mixed-media works and locating

them within a history of art practices that reference or intervene in architectural forms and spaces. In their conceptual focus on a traumatic blurring of the boundaries of inhabitable space, I distinguish these works from those by other artists that relate to abstract perceptions of space such as those by Robert Irwin, James Turrell or Richard Serra, or abstractions of architectural structures such as in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark or Glen Seator or works that engage with architecture as an image, such as those of James Casabere or Berndnaut Smilde. Although the selected works may bear some formal and conceptual relations to these artists and practices, I suggest that the force of trauma in the works and the fact that they retain connection to its psychoanalytic framework, aligns them perhaps more with the Surrealist imaginary and works such as Kurt Schwitters *Merzbau* (1933-37) and practices that attempt to 'permeate the formal with the psychological' (Vidler 2001:1-2). In this sense, I suggest they can be considered part of a broader framework of conceptual art which has its roots in modernist anxieties about the city, and embraces architectural forms and spaces as sites for exploring contemporary anxieties through the social and psychological realms of what Vidler terms 'warped space' (2001). In recent years, such a conceptual framework has been the focus of three key international exhibitions - *Psycho Buildings: Artists take on Architecture* (Hayward Gallery, 2008⁴), *Automatic Cities: The Architectural Imaginary in Contemporary Art* (Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, 2009⁵), and *Temporary Structures: Performing Architecture in Contemporary Art* (deCordova Sculpture Park, 2011⁶) in which artists have explored a variety of approaches to relations between architecture as a boundary between social and psychological space.

Whilst the selected works reference and intervene in architectural spaces and forms, they do not sit easily within any one category of medium or practice. Each artist's approach to architectural space differs - Schneider builds with traditional construction materials, Whiteread casts usually in plaster or concrete, Salcedo and

⁴ Hayward Gallery, London 28 May - 25 August 2008. Featured artists: Atelier Bow-Wow (Japan), Michael Beutler (Germany), Los Carpinteros (Cuba), Gelitin (Austria), Mike Nelson (UK), Ernesto Neto (Brazil), Tobias Putrih (Slovenia), Tomas Saraceno (Argentina), Do-Ho Suh (Korea), Rachel Whiteread (UK).

⁵ Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego 26 September 2009 – 31 January 2010. Featured artists: Michaël Borremans (Belgium), Matthew Buckingham (U.S.), Los Carpinteros (Cuba), Catharina van Eetvelde (France, born Belgium), Jakob Kolding (Germany, born Denmark), Ann Lislegaard (Denmark, born Norway), Julie Mehretu (U.S., born Ethiopia), Paul Noble (U.K.), Sarah Oppenheimer (U.S.), Matthew Ritchie (U.S., born U.K.), Hiraki Sawa (U.K., born Japan), Katrin Sigurdardottir (U.S. and Iceland, born Iceland), Rachel Whiteread (U.K.), and Saskia Olde Wolbers (U.K., born Netherlands).

⁶ de Cordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Massachusetts. September 18 – December 31 2011. Featured artists: Vito Acconci, Ant Farm, Mary Ellen Carroll, Kate Gilmore, Liz Glynn, Gordon Matta-Clark, Mary Mattingly, Sarah Oppenheimer, robbinschilds, Alex Schweder La, Ward Shelley/Douglas Paulson, Mika Tajima, and Erwin Wurm.

Wodiczko interrupt or intervene in existing architectural sites sometimes incorporating additional sculptural objects or performance elements. Most of the works fall under the category of sculpture within the expanded field, (Krauss 1979) and each artist engages with architecture's primary structural elements of walls, windows, floors, doors and ceilings to create both inhabitable and uninhabitable objects and spaces. The works may be said to be '*about* architecture' (Wallace and Wendl 2013: 21) as they subvert and interrupt its conceptual and material spaces and render our experience of it unstable. Most works, perhaps with the exception of Whiteread's uninhabitable sculptures, may also be identified as installation through the principle of the immersive environment and the required presence of the viewer to activate the meanings of the work.⁷ Perhaps due to trauma's own 'unlocatable' aspect and its occupation of thresholds between affect and representation, the difficulty of locating the works within the categories of sculpture, architecture or installation may be seen as part of trauma's unsettling force. As Vidler suggests of Whiteread's work, the affective power of her work lies in 'deliberately confusing sculpture and architecture, and by developing a kind of mutant object that cannot be defined in either set of terms, that asks to be defined indeed by this very refusal' (2001: 149). Thus, rather than locate the works in any one category, I consider them as deliberately unsettling each category of sculpture, architecture and installation, and tapping into a broader unsettling of forms we associate with permanency in line with Andreas Huyssen's observation, 'we have come to read cities and buildings as palimpsests of space, monuments as transformable and transitory, and sculpture as subject to the vicissitudes of time' (2003: 7). The force of trauma in the works thus disrupts our experience of inhabitable space, subverting the traditional view of architecture as a medium in which 'the chaotic world is transformed into what we term rational knowledge' (Schwarzer and Schmarsow 1991: 54) and where we might find a safe haven.

If we accept that part of trauma's power lies in its ability to fracture 'the fragile webs that provide the framework for our interface with the social, political and cultural realms in which we function' (Bradley, Brown and Nairne 2001:6) I suggest the

⁷ Although the principle of the immersive environment is shared between architecture and installation, I distinguish here between the conceptual focus of the selected works being the experience of inhabiting or perceiving architectural space, and other installation and object based works, where the conceptual focus may not be this experience per se, but other conceptual themes.

architectural dimensions of the selected works may be seen to embody something of this fractured framework and its vulnerable spaces. My approach to the architectural dimensions of the works is thus to explore how they challenge both our sense of security and certainty in 'the conditions of a less than settled everyday life' (Vidler 2001:1) particularly under the shadow of the key image of fractured architecture that now haunts this context - the falling towers of the World Trade Centre in 2001. I do not want to suggest that the emergence of architecture as a symbolic site of trauma is reducible to this image or the discourses surrounding 9/11, nor do I wish to suggest that architecture has not always been a target of attack and images of devastated architecture not available to us via images in other contexts. Rather, the particular force of trauma invested in the events of 9/11 and now in the images representing the attacks, has operated as a filter for a number of contemporary anxieties that can be related specifically to human habitation - of buildings and cities, private and public spaces and the fragility of those architectural and civic frameworks to which we attribute such protection. As deCordova states:

An unsteady climate asks us to pause and re-examine our surroundings, as ideals and places that we once thought infallible and reliable begin to crumble away...In the aftermath of recent man-made and natural disasters, and in the decade since the attacks on the World Trade Centre towers there has been a media wave bearing collective witness to the unreliable nature of architecture's capacity to protect and shelter us. (deCordova 2011)

Where the experience of the subject has been the focus of many theories of trauma since the early twentieth century, the external structures designed to protect and shelter that subject have now emerged as an externalised trauma site. I consider this engagement with architectural form and space as a mark of the urgency around the question of our sociality and the humanity referenced within the works, but also an inhumanity that asks us to confront what governs the spaces we inhabit, who and what has the power to affect our position and place in the world. The subversive power of the works thus comes close to what Roann Barris terms 'an architecture of trauma' when she writes,

If architecture signifies such things as shelter and power, and its destruction signifies the rise of a new power or contestation of an older one, it seems

unlikely that there can be an architecture of trauma unless we can identify an architecture which denies shelter and power in its existence. (2008: 5)

Thesis Structure

The thesis is organised into three chapters. Over the course of the chapters, the argument highlights shifts in the concept of trauma from interior to exterior spaces, from private, domestic spaces of the subject to 'the built environment as a whole – the way buildings and space interact to shape the social setting' (Boswell 1992: 22) and our social relations. My foregrounding and repeated return to psycho-analytic theories of the subject is intended to highlight that the public contexts to which the works refer are themselves haunted by a concern for the subject who is never entirely lost. Anxieties around what has happened to the subject are manifest in different ways in all of the works - in Schneider's imperceptible spaces and traces of inhabitation, in Salcedo's evocation of the aftermath of trauma and the space of the disappeared, in Wodiczko's exposure of the lingering effects of trauma on the subject still living, and in Whiteread's materialisation of the domestic room. In view of these shared concerns, I approach the works in line with what Traverso and Broderick identify as a 'critical opening – rather than abandonment or rejection – of the conventional theory of trauma' (2010:4), which acknowledges tensions between subjective and collective experience as an integral part of the problem of representing trauma in contemporary contexts. Thus it is not my aim to suggest that the works chart a simple shift away from the space of private, individual trauma and towards a more social or political space, but rather that through their unsettling elements, they suggest any concept of collective trauma is itself haunted by a subject, the uncertain fate of whom is a source of anxiety and a pervasive sense of loss.

Chapter One, 'Displacing the Room: Installing the Uncanny in Public Contexts' focuses on domestic architecture (in particular, the room) and evocations of the Freudian concept of the uncanny, or *unheimlich* ('unhomely') in Rachel Whiteread's *Ghost* (1990) and Gregor Schneider's *Haus u r* (1985 -) and its installations, *Totes Haus u r*. It explores how the spatial dimensions of the works unsettle our

understanding of the spaces of the house and the meanings of home, comfort and sanctuary. The chapter focuses on how the formal elements of the works confuse distinctions between interior and exterior space and create unsettling effects such as disorientation and uncertainty for the viewer within domestic settings. It examines how the loss of the original architectural structures referenced in the works, may be related to anxieties about the failure of representation and the 'loss' of original experience within trauma. As the traumatic effects of these works are not necessarily related to specific events associated with the architecture, I propose they evoke a non-specific space of trauma where their unsettling effects are related to the irrecoverable or 'lost' nature of the original architecture, evidenced only by its traces. By linking concepts of haunting, the trace and the return with the process of installation, the latter part of the chapter argues that the installation of the works in galleries and museums evokes a sense of a 'public uncanny' and effectively recontextualises the subjective structure of private trauma in public settings.

Chapter Two, 'Inside the Institution: Traces, Cracks and Divided Spaces' moves the focus away from traumas of the domestic subject to those of the political or institutionalised subject where trauma results from the impact of external systems of power. It analyses four works - Gregor Schneider's *Weisse Folter* ('White Torture', 2007) Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* (2003), Krzysztof Wodiczko's *If You See Something...* (2005) and Doris Salcedo's *Shibboleth* (2007) and explores how they unsettle our approach to institutional spaces and concepts of security or protection invested in government or bureaucratic structures. The chapter argues that the architectural dimensions of these works are associated with institutional or State power (for example Schneider's *Weisse Folter* cells are based on the US government's detention cells at Guantanamo Bay) and metaphorically expose spaces of otherness produced by dominant social and political systems. It suggests that through this exposure, the works ask the viewer not only to confront the space of the other, but also to forge a connection with it, often through the experience of vulnerability.

Chapter Three, 'Precarious Memorials: Unsettling the Present' considers the role of memorials or monuments as sculptural or architectural forms in which the memory

of trauma is traditionally given a place or 'home' in public space. It investigates how counter-memorial works interrupt the space of the city and our sense of community cohesion as inhabitants of public space. It analyses some of the differences between permanent memorial works such as Whiteread's *Holocaust Memorial* and the temporary time-based memorials of Salcedo's *Noviembre 6 y 7* and Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* with consideration of the counter-monument debates that emerged in Germany in response to the Holocaust (Young 1992). It considers how the question of ethics within Adorno's argument about trauma and representation, may be shifting beyond the domain of artistic representation towards an engagement with community awareness and co-habitation. In light of this I consider how the architectural spaces in these works might be seen as transitional sites for re-locating the ethics of responding to trauma from the artist and the space of representation, to viewers and our shared experience of public space.

Although this final chapter is concerned mostly with the relationships between architecture and the memorialising of specific historical events, it also considers the role of architecture in some other works such as Wodiczko's *Tijuana Projection* (2001) and *Bunker Hill Monument, Boston* (1998) and Salcedo's *Eighth Istanbul Biennale* installation (2003) where the traumatic content of the work is not directly related to the history of the site. In these works my concerns relate to the potential for civilian architecture to restructure trauma beyond the model of past experience or history and locate it in contemporary 'everyday' contexts with reference to the ubiquitous traumas of civilian life such as poverty, violence or racism. The final section of this chapter thus considers whether architecture can contribute to an expanded field of trauma where traditional relationships between architecture and history are displaced by broader, and perhaps more urgent, questions about our social relations, precariousness and the negative spaces of present-day democracies. It thus considers whether such tensions between trauma and architecture have a particular power to challenge dominant (often US or Euro-centric) spaces of trauma and provide access to a more global, communal space, that can furnish 'a sense of political community of a complex order' (Butler 2004: 22).

Chapter One

Displacing the Room: Installing the Uncanny in Public Contexts

I prefer to work in these private places, but on the other hand I need the museum...
I worked 20 years to get things built in the private space, to bring this into the
museum, because if I don't bring this into the museum then it's not accepted as art.

(Gregor Schneider on installing the *Basement Keller, Haus u r*, 2012a)

When I made *Ghost*, I was interested in relocating a room, relocating a space, from
a small domestic house into a big public concrete anonymous place, which is what
the museums have done all over the world for years and years.

(Rachel Whiteread on *Ghost* in Schneider C 2002: 26)

This chapter discusses the role of the uncanny in Gregor Schneider's *Haus u r* (1985 -) and its installed versions (*Totes Haus u r*) and Rachel Whiteread's *Ghost* (1990)¹. It suggests that the spatial dimensions of the domestic interior in these works operates like the uncanny, offering a material framework for negotiating unsettled boundaries between interior and exterior space and conveying a sense of uncertainty about the space of home. Drawing on Jessica Bradley's concept of displacement as 'a material re-ordering' that creates 'a simultaneous impression of familiarity and otherness' (Bradley and Huyssen 1998:19), the chapter examines how both artists evoke the uncanny through displacing the room as an isolated fragment of domestic space. Although each artist creates rooms and/or domestic interiors using very different construction methods, the focus here is on similarities in the conceptual relationships between the works, the symbolics of the displaced room and the

¹ I have made a deliberate distinction here between *Ghost* and Whiteread's site-specific, public commission work *House* (1993/4) destroyed in 1994 that has also been associated with the uncanny (Iverson 1998; Hornstein 2004). As my focus in this discussion is on the room as a particular space within the architecture of the house, and how its installation in gallery interiors contributes to our understanding of the uncanny in activating different social meanings, I have chosen not to analyse *House* in this account. Whilst I acknowledge that the spatial dynamics of *House* produce a number of similar uncanny effects as *Ghost* and also invokes connections to particular social meanings, I consider it's public space siting and its ultimate destruction to warrant a broader discussion of the regulations around site-specific practices and the politics of intolerance in relation to the appearance of the uncanny in external, urban settings that is beyond the parameters of my concerns in this chapter.

ways in which the room may be seen as a symbol for anxieties about both the space of the subject and the home in contemporary contexts.

Despite its mutations over the course of the twentieth century, the theoretical concept of the uncanny has always contained within it the architectural metaphor of the home. Based on the Freudian concept of '*das unheimliche*', (the 'unhomely') the uncanny describes a disturbance in perception that negates the feelings of comfort and security we associate with the home or 'homely', making what was once familiar appear strange and bringing about a sense of discomfort in moments when what 'was meant to remain secret and hidden ...has come into the open' (Freud 2003:132). The term 'heimlich' contains within it an unsettling duality of meaning as it refers both to 'what is familiar and comfortable' and 'to what is concealed and kept hidden' (Freud op.cit.). As such it offered Freud a way of conceiving of the 'unheimlich' as an element of experience that already contained within it a threat to its own unity and cohesion. Where nineteenth century concepts of the uncanny attributed its effects to the sublime and fears of an external, alien force invading one's home, twentieth century theories added psychological aspects to the concept, associating the architectural space with feelings of uncertainty within the self, or as in Heidegger's conception, a fundamental human sense of 'not-being-at-home' (2010:190), an existential discomfort about one's place in the world.

In recent conceptions, the links between the space of home and the uncanny have been explored more widely in relation to distinctions between the self and the external world of power and social relations, finding particular traction around themes of homelessness, exile and alienation (Masschelein 2003). In conjunction with the shifting conceptual terrain of trauma in the aftermath of World War II, the uncanny has haunted the contemporary imagination providing what Martin Jay suggests is a conceptual platform for culture's 'obsession with the troubled interface between history and memory, narrating the past and commemorating... (and)... the explosion of recent debates over alleged repressed memory, often of trauma and abuse' (Jay 1998:164). Such extensions of the concept to the psycho-social realm had their roots in anxieties about the loss of sanctuary amidst the alienating effects of the modern city and the gradual emergence of a 'domesticated version of

absolute terror' (Vidler 1992:3) that attended and perhaps still attends our fears of invasion in the modern world. Locatable both within and without the self, the uncanny suggests a fundamentally unsettled space of relations between exterior and interior influences, a space where the subject can never be entirely certain of the origins of the disturbance or their relation to it.

The first half of this chapter examines ways in which the unsettling or 'material re-ordering' of interior/exterior spaces within the works relates to the psychological structure of the uncanny and its hidden spaces. Considering the home as the architectural equivalent to the space of the self, (see Bachelard 1994) I relate the operation of the uncanny in the *Haus u r* project and *Ghost* to concepts of internal disunity and interruption that upset notions of home as a unifying or cohesive entity that can protect the subject. By analyzing the effect of each artist's sculptural methods that isolate, fragment and subvert the spatial order and function of the room, I suggest both artists present the room as an uncanny element within the architecture of the home, an otherness that threatens the unity of the self.² As inhabiting the interior of these works is rendered problematic or, in Whiteread's works emphatically denied, my focus is on how the uncanny operates to destabilize the experience of inhabitation for the viewer and thereby question our ability to seek comfort and security in homely structures. As both works reference pre-existing architectural structures which are effectively 'lost' during or after the making of the work³, I suggest the operation of uncanny effects does not relate to any specific traumatic event associated with the history of the architecture's inhabitation or location, but rather to the viewer's perception of its loss and the unsettled spatial dynamics of the works. In this sense, whilst the works can be said to evoke the unsettled foundations of a traumatic experience, this is not associated with a specific identifiable event, but rather with a set of spatial and material effects that suggest uncertainty about their origin or cause.

² The concept of permeable interior boundaries is the foundation of Freud's theories of repression and pertains to division between the conscious and the unconscious. As an effect of repression, the uncanny is something that indicates a rupture of an internal boundary within the self, an interruption of the conscious by the unconscious (repressed material) and thus presents a threat to subjective cohesion.

³ Whiteread selected the domestic site for *Ghost* precisely because it was listed for demolition. The work represents the cast interior space of the living room of the now-demolished Victorian terrace house at 486 Archway Road, North London. (see Whiteread 2009) The house that acts as the foundations for Schneider's *Haus u r*, provides the external structure for his 'inbuilding' of its internal dimensions, a process that continually alters the interior spaces of the house, effectively hiding or erasing the original, a process of layering further elaborated with each subsequent 'inbuild' of walls, floors and ceilings. The original architectural structures of both artists' works are thus effectively 'lost', informing the conceptual terrain of the works and the uncanny. .

The second half of the chapter considers how these unsettling effects take on new meanings when installed or ‘displaced’ from their original architectural sites into the public interior of the gallery. Drawing on histories of installation art that sought to disrupt the gallery space as a white, clean ‘extensive, homogenous space’ (O’Doherty 1986: 87) the latter discussion suggests that via installation the works signal a shift away from the nineteenth century trope of the haunted house, and towards a re-contextualising of the gallery as the site of a broader, social mode of haunting and public architecture as a medium for reflecting on human space and social relations. I suggest this is less a political gesture within the context of institutional critique and more a symbolic gesture that sharpens our focus on the space of the subject in collective or public contexts. Although some installations, such as Schneider’s installation of the *Totes Haus u r* in the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2001) may evoke connections to particular histories such as the Nazi occupation of Germany, such meanings are not necessarily present in other installation contexts such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Australia. As such I argue that installing the works in public contexts is a traumatic gesture in itself that dislodges each work from its own architectural history and ultimately presents the room as a ghost, a lost or displaced object without a home.

Schneider’s *Haus u r* (1985-): Disorientation and the Uncanny



Fig. 1: The *Haus u r* at 12 Unterheydener Straße in Mönchengladbach-Rheydt. External view.

Since 1985 Gregor Schneider has been reconstructing the interior of his family-owned house at 12 Unterheydener Straße in Mönchengladbach-Rheydt, Germany (Fig. 1). The house, positioned next to a lead smelting plant owned by the Schneider family, was owned by his father but never inhabited by the family or anyone else due to its proximity to the toxic industrial site (see Ward 2004:104). Schneider’s project thus began in an

uninhabited house that had personal connections to his family and which has been described by Ulrich Loock as an example of ‘the wretchedness of post-war residential housing in Germany’ (2001:143). The brown brick exterior of the three-storey house appears unremarkable from the outside, but Schneider’s project inside has focused on transforming the original interior into different spatial configurations in an ongoing project of ‘inbuilding’. Working within the original interior structure of walls, floors and ceilings the *Haus u r* represents a process of building ‘rooms within rooms...walls in front of walls, or ceilings underneath ceilings, floors above floors’ such that it was originally conceived by Schneider as ‘a house inside a house’ (Schneider, G 2012a). For viewers entering the house, the original internal structure is not visible, nor is the fact that there are hollow cavities or hidden spaces that have resulted from the constant shifting of its structural components. These spaces have become inaccessible, and in some instances contain photographs of his family or other paraphernalia from Schneider’s life that have become literally, but also quite deliberately trapped within the interior (see Crowley 2009).



Fig. 2: Gregor Schneider *Haus u r, Kaffezimmer* – Coffee Room (1993) Rotating room within a room, plasterboards and chipboards on a wooden construction with wheels. 246 x 289 x 234cm (LxWxH), Rheydt.

Such re-structuring of the interior and the creation of hidden, inaccessible spaces mimics the psychic structure of repression house associated with the effects of the uncanny. The viewer’s knowledge of hidden spaces and repressed or trapped material in the walls works against the familiar appearance of the interior surfaces of the house, which reflects the order and function of any standard German residence,

and presents them with an unadorned replication of a space of social, lived reality. Other features of the house that intensify these uncanny effects are the mechanism built into the floor of the coffee room, which rotates the entire room at a speed imperceptible to the viewer (360 degrees over the course of half hour – Fig. 2) and the artificial construction of sensory effects like the fan that mimics breeze through the curtains of the kitchen and soundproofed rooms. Not only do such structural features create a space where not all is what it seems, but it also confronts visitors with the possibility of ‘unknown’ or

‘unknowable’ spaces within its own interior dimensions, creating a sense that the uncanny resides in the structure of the house itself. As Ulrich Loock explains, the sense of the uncanny is ‘not in the rooms themselves, however disquieting these may be. It lies behind them in the area without access, or if it were possible to enter it, where it would be impossible to tell what one is up against’ (2001:148). As such, the *Haus u r* is an ‘unhomely house’ (see Vidler 1990) not only because it suggests the presence of another force that threatens to undo the unifying purpose of the architecture, but also undermines the experience of ‘safe’ inhabitation for the visitor.

Whilst all these effects point to conceptual links between structural components of the house and the psychic structure of the uncanny, they are often described by visitors to the house as spatially disorienting (Birnbaum 2000). In part this disorientation may be attributed to losing sight of the original interior structure and the idea that the original is not only hidden but in fact lost completely, recalling the uncertainty generated by not knowing the exact origin of uncanny experience or the ‘unknowable’ foundations of traumatic experience⁴. More importantly however, the disorienting effects of the *Haus u r* can be traced to Schneider’s layering of structures that confuse distinctions between internal and external space. Likened to the ‘layers of an onion’ (Puvogel 2001:129) Schneider’s inbuilds are profoundly introspective, windows look onto other windows and walls are built in front of walls such that the disorientation associated with inhabiting the space is not just about being unsure of the orientation of particular rooms to others, but to the location of the outside world at all.

In relation to architectural space, Anthony Vidler identifies the confusion between interior and exterior boundaries as ‘the privileged topoi of the uncanny’ (1990: 36) that emerged alongside the image of the haunted house in the nineteenth century. He suggests the idea that the house itself is an ‘uncanny power’ was informed by a set of ‘peculiar relationships between exterior and interior (that) takes its place among many uncanny houses throughout the nineteenth century’ (op. cit.). The growth of meanings around home and

⁴ This aspect is something to which Schneider refers when he suggests that the only way to access the original is to ‘measure the hidden spaces. No one could get to the original structure any more without systematically drilling apart and destroying the house’ (Schneider quoted in Loock 2001:148).

private space as a sanctuary for the protection of the individual or the family made the domestic interior particularly vulnerable as a space that could be invaded by alien spirits or strangers. This also provided a focus for pre-Freudian concepts of the uncanny as a psychic experience founded on 'a fundamental insecurity brought about by a "lack of orientation", a sense of something new, foreign and hostile invading an old, familiar, customary world' (Ernst Jentsch quoted in Vidler 1992: 23). The haunted house was effectively the negative space of nineteenth century constructions of the home, a trope that challenged the privileged status of home as 'the only rampart against the dread of nothingness, darkness and the obscurity of the past' and a space that 'opposes escape, loss and absence by erecting an internal order, a civility, a passion of its own' (Emmanuel Kant quoted in Perrot 1990:342).

The haunted house provides a pertinent historical backdrop to the *Haus u r* because it symbolises the idea that the forces of otherness, thought to be external to the self could reside in architecture and effectively inhabit the structure of the house. In its twentieth century manifestation however, it took on ideas about the forces of the externalised Other as not spiritual or alien but ordinary familiar forces of the everyday world and the psychological dimensions of the self. In the *Haus u r* the unsettling qualities of everyday domestic habitation are fabricated through such effects as the 'false daylight and fan-generated wind blowing through the curtains that never varies'⁵ (Ward 2004:104) and the floor stains and scattering of domestic items throughout the house (i.e. tea cups on the table, shoes on the bed). Rather than pointing to an external other that appropriates the interior, they relate specifically to what is already interior and familiar, to 'nothing other than what was already there' (Loock 2001:138). As such, the displaced and often partial appearance of everyday phenomena is aligned with the anxiety-inducing effects of the uncanny and threat induced by the unexpected reappearance of the familiar and the possibility it might 'turn on its owners, suddenly to become defamiliarized, derealised, as if in a dream' (Vidler 1992:7).

⁵ Schneider also uses this device of artificial environmental effects in his large-scale architectural installation *END* (Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach November 8, 2008-September 6, 2009) where he creates false rain/condensation on the outside of windows that look onto other walls but are also curtained on the outside.



Fig. 3: René Magritte *In Praise of Dialectics* (*L'Éloge de la dialectique*) (1937) Oil on canvas, 65.5 x 54.0 cm National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.



Fig. 4: Dorothea Tanning *The Birthday* (1942) Oil on canvas 40 ¼ x 25 ½ inch. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

This construction of a kind of cloistered but autonomous interior space is thus made disorienting by excluding the external world, and by creating the sense of a house within a house, or a self within a self. Structural elements such as windows that only look onto other windows or doors that lead only to other doors or cupboard spaces and force the viewer to back-track, recall Surrealist

images where the interplay of interior/exterior architectural boundaries symbolises the workings of the unconscious such as in Rene Magritte's *In Praise of Dialectics* (1937: Fig. 3) or the doors that lead endlessly to other doors or passageways in Dorothea Tanning's *The Birthday* (1942: Fig. 4). Such approaches to the domestic interior reflect the influence of psychoanalytic understandings of the unconscious as a part of the self that is unknown or unruly within the self, but which nevertheless has its own place in relation to the internal order of consciousness. Located within the unconscious, the uncanny represented a threatening element that could rupture the boundary between the conscious and unconscious and create the disturbing and disorienting effects for which it is known. As Loock reminds us 'the uncanny is not the straightforward Other, it is anything of one's own, rendered inaccessible and unidentifiable' (2001: 148). As it retains its original external structure, the interior dynamics of the *Haus u r* might be seen as the uncanny of the original house and a formal reinvention of the whole architectural site as 'both itself and its opposite; it is simultaneously itself and its other' (Biles 2007:85).

The intensified interiority and disorienting effects of the work has led some critics to identify it as a labyrinthine structure that threatens to engulf the visitor and from which they potentially have no escape. Renate Puvogel suggests such effects arise from a forgetting of exterior space once inside the house, which creates an overwhelming sense of interiority. She says '(i)t is not even conceived as having an outside: it definitively only has an inside. Visitors are caught (up) in the construction itself and cannot put any distance

between it and themselves' (2001: 129). This emphasis on interiority not only suggests an erasure or forgetting of the external world, but a questioning of the dialectical distinction between interior and exterior in the first instance. The cramped passageways and dead ends, the windows that look onto other windows in the *Haus u r* suggest this inescapable self-referentiality that disorients the viewer because 'with no way of understanding the layout' (Puvogel 2001: 129) the boundaries that govern their location in the world become lost. On one level such interiority evokes a sense of entrapment and a fear that whatever lurks in its concealed spaces contains only threats of one's own making. On another level, the isolating effects of such a self-governing interior and the loss of reference to the outside world recalls Heidegger's account of the uncanny and the strange displacing structure of existence revealed when 'our being in the world, the world that is our only home is marked by the uncanny discovery that we are *not* at home in the world' (Krell 1992:44).

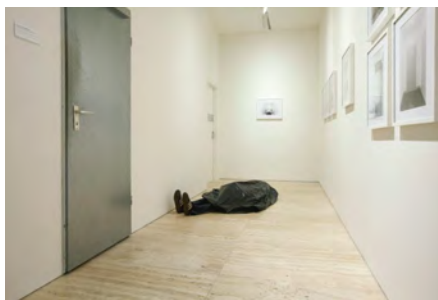


Fig. 5: Gregor Schneider *Haus u r Basement Keller* (2012) External installation view, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

In some installations of the *Haus u r*, re-titled by Schneider as the *Totes Haus u r* ('Dead Haus u r') these disorienting effects of inhabiting the work are not limited to the visitor, but also have a symbolic figurative dimension in Schneider's prostrate (apparently dead) figures who appear in some galleries at the entrance to the installation. Such figures titled *Man* or *Man with Cock* (2004) are presented with plastic bags on their heads rendering them unidentifiable and already cast out of the space into which the viewer is about to enter. The single figure such as the one at the door of the *Basement Keller* installation in Art Gallery of New South Wales (Fig. 5) operates as a symbolic and unnervingly portentous device, suggesting both the uninhabitability of the space within and the possibility of such a fate befalling the viewer. As Look suggests 'the unsuspecting visitor could open the wrong door at the wrong time and plunge into the abyss. It could happen that the visitor, unexpectedly and with catastrophic consequences, transgresses the border with the uncanny' (2001:148). The image of the deceased is not linked to a particular knowledge about the nature of the death, nor the identity of the subject, but is rather placed at a threshold, a symbolic device that

evokes 'the volatile circumstances before and after some major distress' (Puvogel 2001:129). With the juxtaposition of these figures, the *Haus u r* is potentially a space where the uncanny is not only built on the confusion of interior/exterior boundaries, but also on a troubled boundary of life/death recalling its connections to the ghostly, and traces of the past. David Crowley also notes the relationship between life/death in the title of the *Haus u r* and its link to the uncanny when he states:

the project also pointed to birth. *u r* ostensibly refers to the first and last letters of the street on which it stands, Unterheydener Strasse. But *ur* also means origin...In its decomposed state, Schneider's house combined the symmetry of the womb and tomb (poles that Freud famously conjoined in his essay on the Uncanny). (2009: 241)

This is something that as will be discussed below is played out more fully in the process of replicating the rooms of the house in installations and the transition of the work and titles from 'Haus u r' to 'Totes' or 'Dead Haus u r'.

Whiteread's Rooms: Architectural outcasts

Where the unsettling effects of Schneider's work can be attributed to the psychological (or perceptual) effects of physically inhabiting the space of the work, the unsettling effects of Whiteread's works are registered via a displacement of the body itself and its total separation from the space of habitation. Unlike Schneider's *Haus u r*, Whiteread's



Fig. 6: Rachel Whiteread *Shallow Breath* (1988) Plaster, polystyrene. 75.2 x 36.6 x 7.08 inch.

architectural works do not offer the experience of an immersive space, where the viewer inhabits the work. On the contrary Whiteread's approach to architectural form and space retains her traditional sculptural roots, creating a three dimensional object to be viewed from a distance and where the traditional structure of subject/object relations is maintained. It is thus more on a conceptual, rather than formal level that her works have been identified as having similar meanings and effects to Schneider's work in relation to their unsettling

nature and the operation of the uncanny. Whiteread's work poses an alternative spatial framework to Schneider's that, despite referencing similar forms of the house and the room, offers another view of the uncanny and its displacing effects.

Whiteread's 'architectural' sculptures emerged after her first solo show in 1988⁶ in which she exhibited four sculptural works of the cast interior, 'negative' spaces of domestic objects. This show included such works as *Shallow Breath* (Fig. 6) and *(Untitled) Torso*, the cast interior of a water bottle and established the dialectical play between interior and exterior space in Whiteread's work and her casting of the negative space of objects as the foundation of what is now widely recognised as her signature sculptural technique and conceptual terrain. The expansion of her interest from domestic objects to domestic



Fig. 7: Rachel Whiteread *Ghost* (1990) Plaster on steel frame 106 x 140 x 125inch. Installation view, reverse angle Saatchi Gallery, London.

architecture broadened the conceptual scope of her work from objects as indices of daily activities, to architectural spaces as indices of 'living' in a broader sense as Whiteread comments on her 1993 work *House* 'It was about where we live, where we come from, where we sleep, where we have families' (Whiteread in Houser 2001:55). Her first large-scale architectural work, *Ghost* (1990: Fig. 7), was the (seemingly) solid cast of the interior space of a Victorian living room and marked a shift in her work from exploring relationships between the

human body and the objects of daily use, to those between the body and its space of habitation. *Ghost* retained a symbolic connection to the object-based works through its evocation of a space of domesticity and the everyday, but extended these meanings to the larger spatial domain of domestic architecture and with this, to the conceptual terrain of the home. In doing so, the index of the body that informed her object-based works like *Torso* or *Shallow Breath*, and which some scholars have argued is central to the dialectic between interior and exterior in her work, (Wakefield 1994; Cvorovic 2002) took on symbolic

⁶ Rachel Whiteread 1988 at Carlisle Gallery, Islington, London.

meanings associated with shelter and protection from the outside world and the ideals of unity and containment invested in the home. *Ghost's* formal dimensions evoke an interplay between solidity and spectrality, an effect that intensifies the sense of the uninhabitability of the room, and recalls the 'unhomeliness' within the Freudian uncanny.

In what appears as a rejection of the fundamental requirement of architecture that its spaces be inhabitable, Whiteread's works may be conceived as architectural outcasts, or forms that do not 'belong' to the traditional architectural paradigm. As such they have been aligned with the works of the Anarchitecture group of the 1970s and their aim to foster new ways of viewing architecture. Her 'othering' of architecture invoked through rendering its interior space solid, has been likened to the deconstructive approaches of such artists as Gordon Matta-Clark, Richard Nonas and Jene Highstein (Attlee 2007; Mariño 2004) and their questioning of architecture as both a conceptual and material object. Where these artists challenged the structural frameworks of architecture through sculptural approaches such as 'building cuts' and the splitting, splicing, or formal separation of walls, floors and foundations most famously demonstrated by Matta-Clark's 'Splitting' (1974), Whiteread's works actively erase the structural framework, leaving only traces in the form of imprints and stains, and a formal manifestation of the space it once produced. On a formal level, Whiteread's work thus appears less about architecture as a structural framework, and more about the kinds of spaces and boundaries it produces. In their capacity to foreground the spatial relationships between the viewer's body and the work, Whiteread's works are often likened to the large-scale sculptures of the American Minimalist sculptors such as Robert Morris or Richard Serra and Whiteread herself has acknowledged the influence of their capacity to make the viewer think about 'the physical way in which you look at something... think about your physical place in the world' (Whiteread in Houser 2001:55). However, whereas the experience of viewing Minimalist sculpture was marked by the 'temporal movement of the body around the object, through its sites...and the "awareness of one's own body as the potentiality of that field"' (Mariño 2004: 88), Whiteread's viewer is defined by a distinct loss of this potentiality and an inability to move through the site. Her work forces a particular kind of spatial relationship with the viewer based on exclusion,

which within the context of domestic space, becomes a relationship that denies the viewer the experience of inhabitation.

As with Schneider's *Haus u r*, many of the unsettling effects of Whiteread's architectural casts stem from the unsettling of boundaries between interior and exterior space and difficulties associated with inhabitation. Recalling Vidler's identification of the unsettling of boundaries between interior and exterior as the key topoi of the architectural uncanny, Whiteread's apparent 'solidification' of interior spaces in works such as *Ghost* (1990) or *Untitled (Room)* (1993) creates a solid, exteriorised object where we might expect to find a fluid and immaterial interior space. Neville Wakefield suggests that such a gesture forces 'doubt upon the certainty of inside and the distinctness of outside' creating uncertainty about a series of dialectical relationships that inform what he terms 'sculptural presence.... and the whole humanist edifice of spatial awareness' (Wakefield 1994: 76). Some commentators relate this uncertainty to the shift in perception when faced with such formal reversals. As Mark Cousins notes, 'it is as if perception wants to travel in the opposite direction from the intellectual knowledge of what is being represented, of what has been cast. Perceptually it is as if we demand to read the object as the exterior of a solid construction' (Cousins 1996: 37). Others relate it to perceiving the familiarity of domestic space as strange and disrupting the subject's symbolic relation to the interior of the home as a space of comfort. Trevor Fairbrother alludes to such confusion in relation to *Ghost*, when he states '(it) summons up the peculiar feeling of looking at, as if for the first time, what was assumed to be known. It elicits opposing emotional responses, inducing viewers to vacillate between comforting and sinister thoughts' (1994: 91).

The experience of uncertainty when viewing Whiteread's architectural works is not limited to the intellectual or emotional fields however, but also relates to the physical effects of her works on the viewer, which are identified by many commentators as disorienting. Susanna Greeves argues that the spatial play between positive and negative space is disorienting because it confuses the impulse towards habitation and draws attention to the viewer's displacement not only from the space of home, but from the space of the work. Commenting on Whiteread's more recent casts of staircases, she says, '(l)ooking at

Whiteread's ... mindbending stairs we are consciously, physically disoriented, trying to place ourselves in the geometry of the object' (2002: 50). In relation to her room pieces, Whiteread herself has similarly stated that 'There's a sense of puzzlement in just looking at them and thinking, 'We live in that kind of place. How do we function physically within a place like that?' (Whiteread in Houser 2001: 54). This impulse to 'place ourselves' in the object raises the question of how to inhabit the domestic space and whether this is indeed possible, posing another question of our displacement within it.

The symbolic dimensions of being excluded from a domestic space brings with it connotations of homelessness and expulsion from the space of comfort. Whiteread refers to the inherent anxiety in this when talking about making *Ghost* and her realisation that by creating an impenetrable and uninhabitable interior space, she had effectively made the viewer/the inhabitant the wall. She says:

It was the first piece in which I realized that I could absolutely disorient the viewer....
When we finally put the piece up, I realized what I had created. There was the door in front of me, and a light switch, back to front and I just thought to myself: "I'm the wall. That's what I've done. I've become the wall. (Whiteread in Houser 2001: 52)

Such exclusion from the interior not only prevents the viewer from entering the space of the work but it creates a sense of confusion around the object of home. Shelley Hornstein suggests that when the viewer is always already outside the space of home, he/she is not only uncertain about their relationship to that space, but is confronted with the conundrum that he/she can ever know it. She writes, 'we cannot determine what is known and familiar...because it is entirely unknown and cannot ever be known – for entrance to it is prohibited and we are defeated by any attempt to enter regardless' (2004:55). That we cannot inhabit the domestic space not only activates a sense of rejection from the space of home, but a sense that it was never ours in the first place. This recalls the anxiety about the status of the original experience in the *unheimlich* where what was once familiar to the subject returns as unfamiliar and its relation to the self is unclear.

As the uncanny depends on the subject having known the original, the 'unknowability' of Whiteread's spaces - which is intensified by the fact that some works like *Ghost* and *House* are cast from buildings demolished after her casting - suggests a disassociation between the viewer and the domestic space, and hence a more traumatic relation of never having 'known' the original circumstance. Vidler goes so far as to suggest that not only does this cast the viewer 'unceremoniously into the void...to the external surface of an uninhabitable and absolute claustrophobic object' (2000: 148) but ultimately refuses the operation of the uncanny altogether. He claims that by denying the subject any access to the space of home, it can never be familiar to the subject or represented in familiar narratives or forms. He writes:

No longer can the fundamental terrors of exclusion and banishment, of homelessness and alienation, be ameliorated by their aestheticization in horror stories and psychoanalytic family romances; with all the doors to the *unheimlich* firmly closed, the domestic subject is finally out in the cold forever. (2000: 148)

Despite Vidler's suggestion that the exclusion of the subject forecloses the possibility of the uncanny, I suggest the material elements of *Ghost* such as traces of ash in the fireplace, or cigarette stains in the surfaces of the walls⁷ still embody a familiarity and retain a connection to a former inhabitant. The material traces of the original room evoke what Whiteread calls a pathos or humanity in her work (Houser 2001: 55) and a familiarity invested, although not the viewer's own, in recognizable elements. Lisa Tickner suggests the entire cast of the interior space itself is a metaphor for the absent body of the inhabiting subject, which positions the viewer 'in the impossible space *between* inside and outside, or facing a work that anthropomorphizes the spaces of occupation' (2006: 95). In line with this approach to the architectural interior as an index of the absent inhabitant, Whiteread herself has remarked, 'I'm always looking for ways of representing the body but not actually physically putting it there...' (Tusa 2004).

⁷ Material traces like this do not appear in the later 2001 works such as 'Untitled (Apartment)', 'Untitled (Rooms)' and 'Untitled (Basement)' where Whiteread moved on from casting original architectural sites, to using her own custom-made architectural models from which she then took cleaner casts using a different release agent. This was in part a technical decision as the casts for *Ghost* and *House* were difficult and laborious, but it also signified a shift towards a more formal approach to architectural space, that was in some ways released from the 'pathos' of history and memory and more concerned with function and use. See Dennison and Houser 2001.

Such analysis of the conceptual and spatial dimensions of Whiteread's and Schneider's works reveals the different sculptural approaches each artist takes to architectural space and yet the conceptual ground of the uncanny they both share in unsettling the space of home. The confusion of interior/exterior relations in both artists' works represents such a significant feature of their uncanny effects, that it may also prepare the ground for approaching how the uncanny is activated in public contexts when the works are installed within the interiors of the gallery or museum. By focusing on the element of the return in the uncanny, and the concepts of reappearance and displacement that inform its affective power, the following discussion examines how installing the works in gallery settings, reiterates the unsettled dynamics of the 'room within a room' and extends the unsettled boundary of interior/exterior space to other conceptual boundaries between private and public space and individual and collective histories. It thus considers how installing the works in public contexts evokes other elements of displacement and disorientation pertaining to broader social concerns and displaces the uncanny from the private space of the subject to the public realm.

Displacing the Uncanny: Installing the room in public contexts

Since the 1990s, both *Ghost* and the *Haus u r* have been installed in a range of gallery settings. *Ghost* was shown twice in London – at the Chisenhale gallery in 1990 and at Saatchi Gallery in 1992 before it was purchased by the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C and there found its permanent home. The entire interior of the *Haus u r*, retitled *Totes Haus u r* ('Dead House u r') was reconstructed and installed in the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2001 and in the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 2003. Reconstructions of various individual rooms of the house have been installed in galleries across the globe, including the basement installations, 'Keller' in Wiener Secession in Vienna (2000) and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney (2012). Unlike *Ghost* which indexes a singular, now demolished architectural site to which we can never return, Schneider's *Haus u r* installations are reconstructions of his inbuilt spaces within the Rheydt house, using the same dimensions and materials. As such they are a series of rebuilt interior spaces, which through installation are displaced and relocated from one architectural site to others across the globe.

In many respects, the installation of the *Totes Haus u r* (either as a total interior or as separate rooms) and *Ghost* in gallery spaces resonates with and extends the spatial dimensions of the uncanny already present in the works. The unsettling of interior/exterior boundaries is given additional architectural dimensions through the installation of the works inside galleries or museums that bear no relation to the original domestic spaces referenced by the works. The formal displacement of one interior inside another creates disorienting effects as viewers are confronted with a displaced, out-of-context architectural space that sits uneasily within the parameters of the one they are in and the symbolic familiarity of domestic space is 'made strange' through its re-appearance in the institutional, public context of the gallery. Such effects work to forge new connections and meanings within the context of the installation space. As Susanna Greeves says of Whiteread's installed works, 'once they become forms that can be placed in a gallery, they exist in a new physical relationship to the body of the spectator and to the space surrounding them' (2002: 50).

As the quotes from both artists at the beginning of this chapter suggest, installing the works in the gallery removes the works from the context of private space and initiates a series of new relationships in the public realm not necessarily present within the context of the original architectural sites. For Whiteread, the shift to the gallery intensifies the sense of unfamiliarity or anonymity that already informs the works, and elicits a further strangeness between the seemingly familiar domestic space and the 'big, public, concrete anonymous place' (Schneider C 2002: 26) of the gallery. For Schneider, the installation of the rooms of the *Haus u r* in the gallery is significant not only because he considers it necessary for the work to operate in the space of art and therefore to be accepted within a public context 'as art' (Schneider G 2012a) but also because he claims such a move effectively 'kills off' the original house in Rheydt (Birnbaum 2001:17). The change in titles from the *Haus u r* that refers only to the original house, to the *Totes Haus u r* in the installed versions reflects a moment of detachment or death, which like Whiteread's title 'Ghost' adds an element of haunting when the work reappears in different spaces. For both artists, installation not only intensifies the spatial ambiguities already operating between the interior and exterior

boundaries of the works, but also entails a death, a loss of connection to the original site that activates their ghostly aspect, and forges new connections to the present.

On one level, the displacement of the domestic interior within the space of the modern art gallery can be located within the history of institutional critique begun in the 1960s in response to the homogenising effects of the 'white cube' on art and the push by artists to find new contexts and spaces for their work. The interruption of the conventions of the modernist 'white cube' by the domestic, living spaces referenced in the works not only indicates a subversive gesture against the 'sterile and over-rationalized' (Vidler 1992:150) space of modernism, but also, as Looock suggests of Schneider's approach to the Rheydt house, a closing of the gap between art and life, 'an avant-garde exhortation to leave the realms of the symbolic and to engage directly with social and political reality' (2001: 138). On other levels, the installation of the works unsettles relationships between the gallery as a social, public space, and the private space of home, inserting a broader question about the place of the human subject in public space, and the symbolic relations between a 'human' space and that of the highly regulated space of art⁸. As such, the installation of the works indicates a shift in the relationship between the uncanny and the unsettled house of the subject, towards inscribing the gallery as a haunted social space with a shared unconscious inhabited by the ghosts of collective histories.

This link between the uncanny and the social can be traced back to Freud (2003) and the role of the archaic or primitive beliefs within the subject. For Freud, primitive or archaic beliefs form part of repressed material within the subject, and connect us to historical structures of thought that may re-appear in moments when 'we do not feel quite sure of our new beliefs ...(confirming that) the old ones still exist' (2003:247). The uncanny is thus not limited to experiences involving 'infantile' complexes or the individual subject's own psychic state, but may also pertain to the revival of 'primitive beliefs we have surmounted (that) seem once more to be confirmed' (op.cit). Avery Gordon suggests that this latent set

⁸ This was the particular focus of Schneider's 2008 proposal for 'The Dying Room', a room within the gallery in which a self-nominated person would be able to die. In line with his critique of the gallery as a 'maximum security prison for a certain kind of art' (Schneider G 2012b) the Dying Room was controversial for its transgression of the space of representation with the real event of death but it also highlighted the significance of the symbolic and material boundaries between life and death in his work and art's role in mediating them. See Schneider G, 2008.

of beliefs that do not belong to the subject but nevertheless have the capacity to haunt him/her, is one of the aspects of Freud's uncanny that allowed him to reconfigure the origins of uncanny perception from the otherworldly to the worldly, or the supernatural to social realms. She states 'the social is ultimately what the uncanny is about: being haunted in the *world of common reality*....the uncanny is the return, in psychoanalytic terms, of what the concept of the unconscious represses: the reality of being haunted by worldly contacts' (2008: 54-55).

Such a view of the uncanny as a trace of worldly contacts has been explored by commentators in relation to both the *Totes Haus u r* and *Ghost* and the capacity of the works to illuminate unsettled social histories through installation. David Crowley (2009)



Fig. 8: Gregor Schneider *Totes Haus u r* (2001) External site view, German Pavilion, 49th Venice Biennale, Venice.

suggests Schneider's installation of the *Totes Haus u r* in the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2001 (Fig. 8) offers insights into this potential of the work as it forged connections with Germany's traumatic history of the Nazi regime. Unlike other installations of the *Totes Haus u r* that reconstruct singular rooms or isolated sections of the Rheydt house, the installation in Venice was a reconstruction of the entire interior (with some adjustments - see Looock 2001: 141) of the *Haus u r* within the German Pavilion. The Pavilion was itself rebuilt in 1938 under the order of the Nazi regime where

its original external columns and gable were replaced with four palisters representing what Crowley has called 'an unmistakable projection of fascist aesthetics onto the international stage' (2009: 241). Where I have suggested the labyrinthine internal structure of the *Haus u r* suggests the unsettled dimensions of the psyche, the Venice installation took on different nuances due to the particular history of the site and its connection to the fascist period. Crowley suggests the reconstruction of the glass-paned domestic door of the *Haus u r* that in the original marks the ordinary entrance to the house, is transformed into something ghostly in the Venice installation, a 'gesture which perhaps points to the complicity of ordinary homes in the reproduction of Nazism and even as the site of the execution of its

crimes' (2009:241). He goes on to suggest that the re-presentation of the multiple rooms of the house provoke an echoing of the troubled histories of persecution and the potential dangers or fears of ordinary houses during Nazi occupation. He states:

(i)n a strange twist, (Schneider's) secret rooms and false floors seem to echo the desperate places fashioned by Europe's Jews in which to hide in Germany and the occupied countries in the Second World War. These were, as we know, too rarely safe homes. (2009:245)

By housing an 'ordinary' house within an architectural structure associated with Nazi power, Schneider not only collapses a boundary between the subjective and social histories of the two sites, but allows for this collapsing to forge new spaces of the uncanny. Although the elements of repetition and recurrence that inform the uncanny are evident in Schneider's processes of re-building, the installation of the work within the German Pavilion embeds this process within a traumatic history, also forging a connection to the historical role of the concept of the uncanny itself. As theorists like Vidler and Masschelein have argued, after Freud the uncanny appears as a spectre of trauma of the two World Wars and has remained a compulsive and resilient concept appearing throughout our cultural landscapes in spaces where we least expect or want it to. Its reappearance in the context of the Pavilion opens up the broader context of Germany's traumatic history positioning the house as a 'stranded object' (Santner 1990) — a symbolic site of trauma unable to be assimilated into the psyche of contemporary German culture. As Eric Santner suggests, such trauma still persists in post-war German society as an 'inability to mourn' in the face of the enormous task of integrating 'damage, loss, disorientation, decentredness into a transformed structure of identity, whether it be that of an individual, a culture or an individual as a member of a cultural group' (Santner 1990: xiii). In this context, perhaps housing the *Haus u r* within an albeit controversial space of art, becomes a means of exposing the persistent need to find a place for the ghosts of traumatic history, as Derrida proposes the need 'to exorcise not in order to chase away the ghosts, but this time to grant them the right... to... a hospitable memory...out of a concern for justice' (Derrida 2006: 220). Encountering the strangeness of the *Totes Haus u r* in Venice is thus not only a product of collapsing social and subjective spaces, the 'total and abrupt' change of location 'from the exhibition grounds into the unremittingly ordinary rooms' (Loock 2001: 141), but also an

effect of recognising vestigial traces of the archaic, and the collective historical forces that haunt our collective memory and interrupt our contemporary consciousness.

Whilst the significance of these haunted spaces in the Venice installation are potentially limited to the uncanny realms of German history, the installation of other rooms of the *Haus u r* in different gallery contexts, raises the question of how their uncanny effects may transfer to other cultural sites and evoke other spaces of historic or cultural repression. During the installation of the 'Basement, Keller' in the AGNSW, Schneider comments that each exhibition offers new ways of thinking about the room and its conceptual role as an interior, dislocated from its origins and brought to a new place. He says part of the sculptural experiment of the *Totes Haus u r* project, is to see how the room operates as a movable and self-contained architectural space activating different experiences depending on where it is installed. He says:

parts of the cellar, the basement (of the Rheydt house) were shown in Vienna, in Venice, in Los Angeles and now little parts of this here in Sydney...part of this experiment is how do citizens from Sydney react? Or what do they feel in it? Do you have any basement, cellar in Sydney?... Every exhibition was a different experiment for me – a different way of thinking about rooms. (Schneider G 2012a)

Regardless of its German origins, the affective power of the installed rooms of the *Totes Haus u r*, stems from the displacing effects of the uncanny and its power to expose hidden meanings wherever it goes and whenever it unpredictably appears. The repetitive elements of Schneider's reconstructions and the *Haus u r* project as a whole, add an element of abstraction or anonymity to the installed rooms such that they allude to a broadly human space at once familiar and strange and endlessly displaced within public space. The anxiety of inhabiting such a space in this way seems less about specific repressions or site-specific experiences that may be related to particular histories and more about the sense of spatial displacement we may encounter in navigating its boundaries.

The uncanny effects encountered through the installation of Whiteread's *Ghost* have also been aligned with the interplay of meanings between the architectural site to which it

refers and the public space of the gallery. Rachel Carley suggests that the installation of the nineteenth century domestic interior within the modern art gallery may be read as a gesture towards inserting a 'building typology that modern architects sought to repress...and...(which)... stood accused of inducing pathological neuroses' (2008:28-29). In this sense *Ghost* embeds a psychologized view of the architectural interior within a space designed to repress it. The unsettling juxtaposition of these spaces leads us to what Gordon suggests is the space of haunting, 'that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life' (Gordon 2008: 8) and thereby evokes a sense of the contemporary gallery *as* haunted. In its dense and silent occupation of the gallery interior, *Ghost* presents us with a space that like trauma we cannot inhabit or move through, but with which we must co-exist and collectively acknowledge its presence. Despite the site-specific history of 486 Archway Rd, London, the original architectural site referenced by the work, the displacement of its living room as an uncanny reminder of a home once lived in, suggests an anxiety about the loss of the space of the subject and an endless displacement of the question of home.

In both their formal qualities and the effects of their installation, the *Totes Haus u r* and *Ghost* re-present the room as a trace element of the original architectural sites to which they refer. In relinquishing their connection to the original site, they appear only as the trace of a former architecture, a displaced fragment of a home now lost. The displaced rooms of the works haunt the galleries in which they are installed, not as mnemonic traces of the gallery space, but more broadly and perhaps unsettlingly as displaced fragments of the space of the subject and the repressed elements of social life. Carley alludes to these effects when she observes the shifts in meaning and effect in the installations of Whiteread's *Ghost* in different galleries. She writes:

Ghost returns to haunt the various institutions in which it finds itself. The atmosphere it generates alters dramatically in relation to the size and scale of the space in which the sculpture is exhibited. When it was placed in the capacious Saatchi Gallery at the Boundary Road site in Camden (1992), *Ghost's* footprint appeared especially meagre, drawing attention to the smallness of the spaces in which many of us live out our lives. In comparison, when shown in the low-ceilinged Chisenhale Gallery in Bethnal Green (1990), the work dominated the space,

affording the sculpture a monumental aspect belied by the original room's humble provenance. (Carley 2008: 27)

In light of this observation, I suggest the affective power of *Ghost* and the rooms of the *Totes Haus u r* is generated from the unsettled interior/exterior boundaries of the works and ground it prepares for the constant displacement of meanings when installed in different contexts. Interpreting the room as a trace thus allows us to glimpse 'an essential disequilibrium' (Cvoro 2002:54) within the works that subverts architecture's promise of security or stability, showing us the spaces that haunt it, threatening to displace its function. The uncanny room is thus a productive element that like Derrida's notion of the trace, works to expose the unsettled conditions of any architectural space in which we might attempt to fix meaning or find a secure location on the world. In forging connections to the archaic elements of our collective experience and the histories of other lives, the rooms of *Ghost* and the *Totes Haus u r* appear in line with Derrida's trace as 'the intimate relation of the living present with its outside, the openness upon exteriority in general, upon the sphere of what is not one's own' (Derrida 1973:86). As mobile sculptural objects these works thus straddle the spaces of subjective and collective inhabitation, refusing to occupy either fully and offering only a fragment of a home once unified and whole.

Perhaps in this regard, the most unsettling aspect of the works is the absence of ground, the lack of foundation upon which to build one's home or a sense of belonging and the challenge to locate the space of the subject in the world at all. Through installation and the knowledge that neither of the original architectural interiors 'exist' anymore, the works create an intensified sense of displacement that forecloses the possibility of returning home, keeping our relation to an inhabitable place of security perpetually unresolved. The temporary nature of the installations intensifies this sense of homelessness and a lost subject, bringing the 'not-being-at-home' of the uncanny (Heidegger 2010) in line with the space of the traumatic subject, which as Foster maintained in the post-modern context is 'evacuated and elevated at once' (Foster 1996:168).

Conclusion

In the works discussed in this chapter, the boundaries between interior and exterior space and subjective and collective inhabitation are left unsettled and unresolved. Whilst the containment of the works alludes to the promise of architectural space to provide security and shelter in the form of a home, they refuse to deliver on this promise, instead offering only glimpses of an uncanny Other that haunts its interiors. In both *Ghost* and the *Haus u r* project the affective power of displaced interiors exposes an unsettled relation to the external world beyond the privacy of home, and the confines of private inhabitation. Drawing on a history of uncanny architecture, the interior/exterior dynamics of the works disorient and displace the viewer, posing the question of our relation to the world beyond our own sense of belonging, and relocating the domestic in the shifting contexts of our social spaces and collective histories. The effect of installation is, like the uncanny itself, productive in the meanings it suggests and unsettling in the sense of spatial displacement it generates within the galleries in which the works are installed.

Neither Schneider's repeated reconstructions of the rooms of the *Haus u r* nor Whiteread's solid interiors suggest the ghosts with which we live in our culture or within ourselves can be reconciled, abandoned or hidden. Both artists find a home for them in our public galleries and in doing so present them to us for viewing, posing the question of where and to whom they belong. Whether we read the works as metaphors for anxieties about the fate of the subject in contemporary social contexts, or the persistence of an unresolved and potentially unresolvable question of home, the force of the uncanny asks us to negotiate a territory that is both familiar and strange in which despite not being our own, we might nevertheless recognize a human space. In reference to Heidegger's view of the uncanny as that which asks us to recognize the 'destability of all habitation' in our psyches, our bodies, our built environments as the foundation of human angst, (see Bronfen 2001: 56) Martin Jay suggests the uncanny asks us to recognize and learn to live with the ghosts that persist in our consciousness. He writes:

whereas there can never be a perfectly secure home, a domestic interior
impervious to incursions from without and the return of what has been excluded
from it, the alternative should not be actual or even metaphorical homelessness per

se...Perhaps we should strive instead for the strength to dwell in perpetually
haunted houses, learning to live with the spooks that periodically invade them.
(1998:163)

Whether the art gallery is the space where we can learn to live with the ghosts of our culture, or whether the uncanny can be tolerated beyond the gallery in our urban spaces is a question that haunts the public work of both artists, evidenced most powerfully in Whiteread's derealised *House* (1993/4) and the controversies surrounding Schneider's *CUBE* (2005-) projects⁹. As the following chapters explore, such questions may be more tolerable in relation to other areas of the traumatic paradigm where the origins of our disturbance are more readily identifiable. In the context of *Ghost* and the *Haus u r*, the question of securing a home for our ghosts is left unanswered, but perhaps as Elisabeth Bronfen (2001) suggests, it is not the role of art to answer these questions but rather to record their traces.

⁹ The controversies surrounding both works, Whiteread's *House* and Schneider's *CUBE* relate to the regulation of public art by external organisations. Whiteread's sculpture divided the East London community where it was built and installed, ultimately culminating not just in its removal, but demolition under Council orders in 1994. *CUBE* is Schneider's most abstract architectural-scale sculpture formally resembling the Ka'aba in Mecca. Officially invited to install the work in St Mark's Square in Venice as part of the 2005 Venice Biennale, it was rejected by the Venice Biennale Committee shortly before the opening, on the basis that it presented a threat to public safety, reasons which Schneider (and others) interpreted as political censorship in the post-9/11 period. Schneider fought the decision but failed to have the sculpture installed in that instance. The work was later successfully mounted as *CUBE HAMBURG* in 2007 in the forecourt of the Hamburger Kunsthalle as part of 'The Black Square – Homage to Malevich' exhibition and the controversies were the focus of Schneider's 2012 '*scheiß e-mails*' exhibition (Future Gallery, Berlin). Such destructive and prohibitory acts against these artworks indicates the level of government power in regulating public art and public space, but perhaps more revealingly, the depth of resistance to the uncertainties of the uncanny occupying public space at all and a refusal to integrate its critical questions into public debate. Ironically, but perhaps fittingly for the uncanny, these works have generated such questions in their absence. For further commentaries see Schneider G 2006; Dimitrikaki 2004; Vidler 2000.

Chapter Two

Inside the Institution: Traces, Cracks and Divided Spaces

The building is not only an institutional 'site of the discourse of power' but, more importantly, it is a metainstitutional, spatial medium for the continuous and simultaneous symbolic reproduction of both the general myth of power and of the individual desire for power. For these purposes, the building is 'sculptured' to operate as an aesthetic structure, thus assisting in the process of inspiring and symbolically concretizing (reflecting) our mental projections of power.

(Krzysztof Wodiczko 1983:186)

Where the first chapter explored relations between trauma and exteriority through ideas about the shifting boundaries within the self and their relation to the world outside the home, this chapter focused on external forces that can be identified as distinctly political in origin and relating to external institutions of power. In all the four works discussed in this chapter, externalised but invisible systems of power such as the US government in Schneider's *Weisse Folter* (2007) and Wodiczko's *If You See Something...* (2005), and the more conceptual 'institutions' of Orwell's Big Brother in Whiteread's *Room 101* (2003) and imperialism in a broad sense in Salcedo's *Shibboleth* (2007) are referenced in the works as sources of trauma. Through spatial dynamics that divide the viewer from spaces in the work or from other viewers, all these works reference governmental or institutional structures as sources of trauma that have the power to control the subject's experience of the space and to divide them from others. As with those discussed in Chapter One, the architectural interior in these works is an unsettled site of inhabitation and structural boundaries between interior and exterior space, such as the wall or the floor, are primary zones of division and uncertainty. Although these works retain elements of confusion and

disorientation associated with the psychological effects of trauma, I argue that their focus is less on the effects of trauma within the internal space of the subject and hence less on trauma as an isolated subjective event, and more on how trauma is produced through power relations and the political status of the subject. As such, where the first chapter aligned domestic interiors with the psychological space of the subject, these works move us into the terrain of institutional interiors where we encounter architectural spaces that are informed by a particular political context and a notion of a subject that is effectively *subjected to and subject of* external powers.

A recurring concept in theories of trauma is the identification of the origin of trauma with an external force outside of and beyond the control of the subject. In psychoanalytic theory, such exteriority is associated with a violence enacted against the subject that disrupts the subject's psychological boundaries and capacities to contain a cohesive sense of self. In psycho-analytic theory, trauma is conceived by Freud as a 'massive cathexis of external stimulus that breaches the protective shield of the....ego' and by Lacan as 'the opening of the ego to an exteriority that shatters its economic unity' (Critchley 1999:191). In theories of modern space, Vidler (2000) suggests that such theorisations of trauma arose in conjunction with new threats of modernity and the rise of the modern city. The emergence of spatial anxieties such as agoraphobia and claustrophobia grew alongside a view of the city as alienating and threatening, a space that disrupted the Enlightenment ideals of a unified, rational subject. Whilst psychoanalysis had begun to recognise the unconscious dimensions of the subject and the potential for fragmentation and division within the self, metaphors of the city became the repository for visions of this fragmentation on a broader scale, a space where fears of estrangement and Georg Lukács 'transcendental homelessness' (see Vidler 2000:66) were symbolically manifest in the divisive spaces of the city's buildings and streets. The combined effects of 'technological development, consumer spectacle and subjective disquiet' (Vidler 2000: 6) that produced such an unsettling sense of the city's unconscious, has more recently developed impetus

around concepts of the subjugating power of the urban built environment (Lefebvre 1991; Foucault 1977), particularly as it relates to socio-economic division and housing and government surveillance in the wake of terrorist threats against the West. Central to the concept of the alienating city was the idea that space itself could impact on us in ways that could destabilise the foundations of the self and, if produced under the requirements of a 'disciplinary regime' (Foucault 1977) could create a range of controlling effects. This idea that space, and particularly architectural space could be powerful and affect certain modes of inhabitation underpins the conceptual frameworks of the works in this chapter.

Historically these works can be located on a broad trajectory of political art practices that developed in the 1960s and 70s as part of a growing discourse in the West around questions of social inequality, democracy and political citizenship. Within this broad movement of 'critical, resistant artistic practices that challenge(d) the economic, as well as the political and social, status quo' (Adan 2010: 585) architecture emerged from experiments in sculpture and site-specific practice as a material and symbolic framework that allowed for a particularly direct engagement with the politics of social space and as Wodiczko has said of his own work, a field for exploring 'a social system: a new economic condition and a psycho-political experience' (Wodiczko 1986:11). The works of the Anarchitecture group, in particular Gordon Matta-Clark or conceptual artists Daniel Buren and Michael Asher engaged with architectural form and space as a means of 'decentring the power and privilege of certain locations in the field of contemporary art' (Adan 2010: 585) and addressing the question of political power through the institutional structures that housed it. Wouter Davidts writes,

Since the 1960s, architecture is incessantly perceived and deemed as an instance to be acted *against*. Architecture is regarded as the discipline and practice that represents and enforces the system – its institutions and the social order – and needs therefore to be put on trial, pierced, cut, demolished,

split, torn apart, etcetera. Architecture gives form and identity to institutions, and is therefore the most exquisite target to be able to attack them. (2006)

Based in institutional critique, much of this work was directed at the architecture of the gallery or related specifically to the cultural management of art within the gallery system. Whilst all the works in this chapter are installed within gallery spaces, I suggest they indicate a shift in focus away from the institution of art as such, and use the gallery rather as a site embedded within a broader socio-political context of institutional spaces of power. Within this context, political institutions such as governments and bureaucracies have come under closer critical and public scrutiny and issues such as marginalisation and social inequality, the responsibility and accountability of governments, and the movement of populations across geographic and political borders, have gained a particular urgency in recent years. All the works discussed in this chapter have emerged from this historical context and reflect different aspects of these global concerns. In particular, their unsettled spaces indicate an engagement with political processes that result in or actively perpetrate trauma against the subject such as torture, (in Schneider and Whiteread), or racial division and persecution (in Salcedo and Wodiczko). As all the works have emerged in the post-9/11 period, they may also be related to a growing engagement within contemporary art with the impact of traumas resulting in non-Western or third world contexts, and more generally 'a critical distance towards the neoliberal new world order' (Bishop 2012: 12). As such, I suggest that whilst these works are still located within interior gallery spaces, they reference external institutional practices that seek to exclude, suppress or divide the individual subject from others for political purposes and agendas.

In order to theorise how these concepts relate to the political and traumatic effects of the works, I draw on the works of Michel Foucault (1977; 1982), Giorgio Agamben

(1998) and Judith Butler (2004). All three theorists provide critical concepts relating to power relations, particularly the experience of division as it relates to what Foucault has termed 'dividing practices' through which the subject is 'either divided inside himself or divided from others' (1982: 778). By focusing particularly on how the works construct divisive spaces, I suggest they provide the viewer with an opportunity to reflect on and potentially experience the effects of social and political division. By asking the viewer to inhabit such spaces, I argue that these works not only provide important perspectives on the impact of power but actively stage political experiences or encounters. This is not to suggest that they promote particular views on political issues, attack architecture as a form of protest or invite the viewer to participate in political activity (as per agitprop or forms of participatory art for example). Rather, I suggest these artists create such ambiguous and unsettling spaces in order to bring power relations *into play*.

(In)Human Space: Gregor Schneider's *Weisse Folter* (2007) and Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* (2003)



Fig. 1: Gregor Schneider *Weisse Folter (Passageway No. 1)* (2007)
1500x200x230cm (LxBxH), K21 Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen,
Düsseldorf.

Between 2003 and 2004, photographs of the US government's military detention camps at Abu Ghraib in Afghanistan and Guantánamo Bay in Cuba entered into public circulation on the internet. The images, now widely recognised as evidence of the US's human rights violations and breach of

the Geneva Convention's global ban on practices of torture, depicted the inhumane conditions and practices to which the camps' detainees were subjected, causing immediate and widespread concern about the legal implications of the US's response

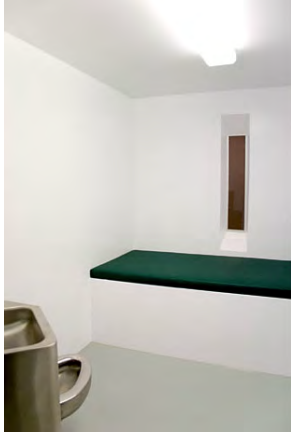


Fig. 2: Gregor Schneider
*Weisse Folter (High Security
and Isolation Cell No 2)*
(2007) 338 x 220 x 230 cm,
K21 Kunstsammlung
Nordrhein-Westfalen,
Düsseldorf.

not provoke the same level of outrage as the notorious images of torture at the Abu Ghraib camp, the photographs of its cells and cages, equipment and furniture clearly indicated the traumatic levels of isolation and deprivation of liberties inflicted upon its inhabitants. Located outside the area of US legal jurisdiction in Cuba the purpose of the Guantánamo Bay camp was the detention of individuals suspected of involvement with terrorist organisations, a move justified by the imperative of the US defense strategy towards 'the production of intelligence' in the aftermath of terrorist invasion. In such a location not only were detainees outside the bounds of protection under US (or any) legal system, but were hidden from public view for several months following

the establishment of the camp (Kirk 2005).

In response to seeing these images, Gregor Schneider developed his work *Weisse Folter* in 2007 (Fig. 1) – an architectural structure resembling the cells of the Guantánamo Bay facility installed in the basement of the K21 Museum in Düsseldorf, Germany. Resonating with his ongoing interest in spaces of isolation, imperceptibility and disorientation, *Weisse Folter*, which translates as 'White Torture'¹, consisted of a series of corridors, cells and rooms painted in the same colour palette as the actual cells, that visitors were asked to explore either singly or in pairs. The interior of the

¹ 'White torture' practices leave no physical traces and include amongst other things psychological manipulation techniques to induce shame, guilt and betrayal (using religious, sexual or cultural triggers) or physical abuse such as water-boarding, exposure to loud noise or music and sleep deprivation. White torture is an illegal and inhumane practice that exploits the bio-political status of the human being, but it is also a form of trauma that is politically constituted and motivated and transforms the human subject into a purely political object. Defined as 'enhanced interrogation techniques' by the US administration, such activities are designed to provoke detainees into divulging information that may be used against their own country for the political purposes of the perpetrator.

work has been described by commentators as clinical and starkly lit, 'intensely unwelcoming and alienating' (Freaky 2010: 40) and with the embedding of sound-proofing materials in the ceilings and the smell of fresh paint throughout, claustrophobic and hence potentially uninhabitable for some visitors.² Each of the rooms contained minimal furniture and facilities such as toilets and basins suggestive of a solitary confinement, explicitly referencing the interiors of the Guantánamo Bay facility down to the green colour of the mattresses and the slim, rectangular window offering limited views to the outside world (Fig. 2). When moving through the work, viewers would find some doors open freely whilst others stayed locked, in some cases locking behind them after entering the room, a technique he also employed in his later work *END* (2008/9). The sensory and spatial effects of *Weisse Folter* created a sense of interplay between agency and powerlessness for the viewer, an experience of sometimes being coerced into certain decisions and movements, whilst being the only subject able to freely act within the given space.

One of the critical issues arising from the US defence strategy and the establishment of the detention camps in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib was the question of sovereignty and the power of the US government to detain individuals without any legal code to support such action or protect the individuals concerned. It is commonly acknowledged that the fear arising from 9/11 created a culture of suspicion and surveillance in the US as the government granted itself sovereign power to define the 'war against terror' and to mobilise this definition in the public consciousness, sanctioning whatever military or social apparatus it deemed necessary to combat a new and 'invisible' enemy. Part of its apparatus was the implementation of indefinite detention of individuals outside the American homeland as a strategy to combat such an enemy and to build intelligence in order to protect US interests (Kirk 2005).

² The work came with a warning to visitors not to enter if they suffered claustrophobia or were prone to panic attacks or anxiety.

As Butler contends, '(i)ndefinite detention' is an illegitimate exercise of power, but it is, significantly, part of a broader tactic to neutralize the rule of law in the name of security' (2004: 67).

The location of the camps outside US territory and the illegal treatment of individuals within them, essentially created an isolated militarised space in which the US government could act as a sovereign entity and define its own juridical order. The camps were (and Guantánamo Bay is still operating) thus both inside and outside the US government rule of law, effectively positioned on a threshold that can only be maintained by US officials who control it as a boundary and determine who and what kinds of activities can be included in and excluded from such spaces. Butler argues that the US government's establishment of detainee camps exemplifies a mode of governmentality that exploits the singularity of sovereign power structures by granting itself the power to suspend and limit the jurisdiction of law, whilst simultaneously granting its strategists and bureaucrats, not elected officials, 'an extraordinary power over life and death' (2004: 59). Within such a structure she suggests, the source of power is effectively invisible and untraceable, operating through 'a diffuse set of strategies and tactics....to dispose and order populations, and to produce and reproduce subjects...in relation to specific policy aims' (2004: 52).

Installed within the basement of K21, Schneider's *Weisse Folter* offered a contained architectural space in which these invisible and ambiguous power structures were symbolically put into play. As a work completely contained within the gallery building, but with its own pre-determined interior, it operates like a space of 'sovereign exception' which Agamben suggests 'does not limit itself to distinguishing what is inside from what is outside but instead traces a threshold (the state of exception) between the two' (1998: 19). The corridor and room structure of the sculpture is effectively a series of thresholds that operates like a carefully constructed machine of

interiority, never giving away its exterior. The unsettling sensory aspects of the work such as its claustrophobic atmosphere, and the self-locking doors mimic a sovereign power that as Suzi Freake comments 'always seems to maintain the upper hand over its inhabitants' (2010: 39). In its multiple, linear cellular structure it symbolises the diffuse, unlocatable and untraceable power of governmentality that divides subjects from other spaces in the work or from other viewers. Through its functional and spatial features it sets up a disciplinary power dynamic that 'designates the way the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed' and 'structure(s) the possible field of action of others.' (Foucault 1982:790) In this respect the internal spaces of *Weisse Folter* may be aligned with Foucault's concept of power that is dynamic and productive, concealing the internal rationality of its systems and maintaining an 'antagonism of strategies' (1982: 780) when put into play.

The spaces of *Weisse Folter* produce this antagonism between the viewer and the architectural space, as the viewer is isolated and to varying degrees controlled by the spatial organisation of the work, but still 'free' to move through it at their own will. As such, the work exposes a question of the viewer's vulnerability to power and their capacity to act within its structures. The white torture, referenced in the title and which was central to the illegal activities at Guantánamo Bay also occupies this antagonistic space. As a mode of torture that leaves no trace on the body of the prisoner, it involves a number of different tactics that exploit the mental and physical limits of the individual. Not only do the sparse and clean surfaces of the work recall the traceless impact of white torture on Guantánamo Bay's inhabitants, but by inviting his viewer to inhabit a space associated with such acts, Schneider places them within a morally ambiguous space. The absent inhabitant of the cells to which the work refers is the detainee who without legal status 'ceases to become eligible for basic, if not universal, human rights' (Butler 2004: 57). By asking his viewer to inhabit this space Schneider asks them to occupy a space of suspension and indeterminacy in which it is unclear as to where the space of the human is at all within such institutional

frameworks. In the absence of any figurative elements or traces of human subjects in the work, Schneider creates a complex dilemma about whether we are subjected to or subjects of 'the disciplinary process by which State power makes man as a living being into its own specific object' (Agamben 1998: 13). Without a full disclosure of the source of power, the viewer inhabits a space that confuses the sense of complicity with the power structure and hence potentially occupies both positions of perpetrator and victim.

As the origins of power remain invisible in *Weisse Folter*, it effectively suspends the viewer within a power structure, dividing them from other viewers and from the public space of the gallery outside it, and potentially dividing them within themselves. I suggest that by foregrounding the antagonistic dynamics of power as its unsettling aspect, the impact of *Weisse Folter* lies in the unresolved question of our own relationship to the invisible, absent detainee to whom the work refers and our responsibility to them as the 'unrepresentable' other who is unable to act freely. *Weisse Folter* is not a reproduction of the Guantánamo Bay cells, but in its references to the original site, it evokes the divisive effects of power it represents and the gap between us and the political 'un-representability' of its inhabitants. Such effects are reflected in the viewer's ambiguous position on the boundary between subject and object within such a system of power and a radical indeterminacy that also characterises politically-induced trauma 'where subjectivity and objecthood are ambiguous and undecidable' (van Alphen 1999: 25).

From the question of sovereignty and the invisible workings of the US government in Schneider's work, we move to the bureaucratic spaces of power in Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* (Fig. 3). Commissioned by the BBC in 2003 as part of their 'Broadcasting House Public Art Program' Whiteread's cast of the internal space of their broadcasting Room 101 responded to the historical and fictional terrain of the



Fig. 3: Rachel Whiteread *Untitled (Room 101)* (2003)
Plaster and steel frame, 300 x 500 x 64cm, Victoria and
Albert Museum, London.

room before its demolition during the redevelopment of the BBC's building. The work occupies a rich and complex threshold between historical, literary, and architectural allusion, referencing the torture room in George Orwell's 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (2003) which Whiteread makes into a tangible form.

Emerging as a concept in Orwell's novel just after World War Two, Room 101 became more a cultural construct than a place – a space that lived inside everybody and a fear that everyone knows. As the antagonist O'Brien says to Winston in the novel, 'You asked me once...what was in Room 101. I told you that you already knew the answer. Everyone knows it. The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the world' (Orwell 2003: 325). As a metaphor of post-war anxiety, Room 101 gave new a spatial framework to the idea of the modern individual as defined by trauma, developed around the specific nightmare of one's own making and an internal terror from which no-one could escape. The torture room in Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, was a space controlled by the totalitarian regime of Big Brother that contained 'the worst thing in the world' for individuals living under its control. 'The worst thing in the world' refers specifically and only to the deepest fears of each individual and the room represents the extent of Big Brother's power, not just to control the choices and actions of individuals, but to infiltrate their minds to the degree that it knows their worst nightmares. Such knowledge is then used against them in instances of non-conformity to Big Brother's 'Ministry of Truth' regime, as is the case with the novel's embattled protagonist, Winston Smith who betrays his lover when threatened by Big Brother with the realisation of his worst nightmare of being eaten alive by rats. Room 101 in the BBC building also has biographical connection to George Orwell himself, as he worked for the BBC in the room during World War 2 (1941-3) preparing essays and

broadcast material. Although architecturally different from the fictional version (the BBC's Room 101 contained windows whereas the novel's does not) it is generally believed Orwell's experience there provided the basis for fictionalising it as the torture room in his novel.

Whiteread's cast of the internal space of Room 101 is, like most of her architecturally derived sculptures, built from white plaster cubic units, cast from the internal walls of the room. Unlike her other works such as *Ghost* however, with *Untitled (Room 101)* she cast all six sides of the room, the floor, ceiling and walls, sealing the sculpture and effectively creating another inaccessible interior inside its tomb-like form. Prior to demolition the room had been full of metal work and pipes which were removed for Whiteread's casting, creating surfaces that she describes giving the appearance of being 'blown-up, pock-marked... it actually felt like a room that had been bombarded with shrapnel' (Whiteread in Cole 2004). This interplay between historical allusion and the effects of its stripped architectural function evoke a traumatic materiality that resonates with the fictionalised space of torture represented by the room. Constructed at a time when England was on the verge of going to war with Iraq, the ghostly traces of damage from World War Two on London's buildings informed Whiteread's approach to this conceptual terrain. As she comments 'It was at the beginning of the Iraq war, so it felt like a response to that....When you look around London and inspect the outsides of buildings, they often still have pockmarks all over them. So, it looks very much like that, which felt quite Orwellian' (op.cit).

As with Schneider's *Weisse Folter*, the affective impact of Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* lies in the materialisation of a symbolic space associated with torture and the workings of a dominant power against the individual. The inversion of interior/exterior space that informs her sculptural approach in general, takes on a particular meaning in this work relating to the invasion of private space by the institution of Big Brother and

the processes of power which transform the internal psychology of the individual into an externally controlled space. The traumatic dimensions of such processes are perhaps less about the breach of individual privacy, and more about the idea that the institution holds the power to materialise private fears in real time and space. In some respects, Whiteread's casting of the interior space of Room 101 has overtones of this traumatic gesture as she effectively materialises a space of fear and captures the moment between subjection and the transformation of the private individual into a political object. Whiteread comments on the powerful effects of rendering this space tangible:

Room 101 is a place that we don't know about...it's a place we can sort of put our fears... and somehow I've made it concrete by casting it and now it sort of exists. But Orwell's Room 101 never existed, it was a fiction. I've had the extraordinary opportunity to cast what was a fiction and we now have an object that isn't fiction anymore, it's actually existing. (Whiteread in Claypole 2004)

Whiteread's comment here reflects on the power of sculpture to materialise an idea in form and space but she also points to the place of Room 101 in the collective imagination. Rather than focusing on the individual, the minimalist, abstract dimensions of her work reference an institutionalised space, de-specifying any fears that might relate to an individual, and leaving it open to the projection of fears we as a society may have. In this way, it relates to a more abstract conceptual space of fear in our culture at large. As Vivien Lovell writes, 'the space stands as a metaphor for the collective memory and the popular imagination of the worst thing that can happen to you' (quoted in Townsend 2004: 205).

As we have seen with Whiteread's *Ghost* in Chapter One, the installation of her works in gallery settings extends the meanings of the work to the social realm and allows it to interact with the meanings of institutional space. The installation of *Untitled (Room 101)* in the Italian Cast Courts at the Victoria and Albert Museum was a subversive

move that interrupted the cultural dynamics of the collection space on a number of levels. The Cast Courts house the Museum's plaster casts collected over the course of the mid to late nineteenth century when the reproduction of major works of European art via casting was a key practice of cultural heritage. The installation of Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* amidst casts of classical figurative sculptures and architectural pulpits and columns not only disrupts the historical lineage of the collection but its minimalist formal dimensions jar against flow of the classical style of the surrounding sculptures as it resembles more the plinths and architraves of the gallery itself. Installing an architectural sculpture associated with individual psychological torment and bureaucracy in a space reserved for the celebration of sculpture in the high classical style creates an unsettling juxtaposition of historical and stylistic elements that lends an air of stifled movement and silence to the collection space. Such an effect seems to halt history in its tracks and situate a traumatic space at the centre of our collective experience, distinctly twentieth century in its historical reference point but irrepressibly present and determinedly part of our cultural heritage. By evoking such a space within the Victoria and Albert Museum, Whiteread asks her viewer to re-examine the idealised vision of humanity represented by the classical collection, and recognise the potential of a totalitarian power to displace the aims of our cultural institutions and practices. As Tony Benn comments, the relevance of Orwell's vision to contemporary politics is that we are currently witnessing the materialisation of all that Big Brother represents - 'the abolition of history, the distortion of language, a permanent enemy, demonization, the loss of civil liberties' – on a global scale (Tony Benn in Claypole 2004).

Unsettling the Border: Wodiczko's *If you See Something...*(2005) and Salcedo's *Shibboleth* (2007)

From the spaces of torture and suppression in Schneider's and Whiteread's works, we move to the spaces of trauma resulting from the regulatory processes of the US

immigration system and its ensuing social division in Wodiczko's *If You See Something...* (2005: Fig 4)³. As with Schneider's and Whiteread's works, Wodiczko



Fig. 4: Krzysztof Wodiczko *If You See Something...* (2005)
Video projection and sound installation, (detail), installation
view, Galerie Lelong, New York.

evokes trauma on an unsettled threshold between interior/exterior spaces and alludes to an invisible system of power that controls individuals and provokes socially divisive attitudes. Wodiczko's title *If you See Something...* refers to the Homeland Security campaign 'If you see something, say something' launched by the US

administration under George Bush in all public spaces in the US to encourage public vigilance and reporting of 'suspicious' activity following the 9/11 attacks. Emerging in the wake of terror, it was launched as a campaign about protecting the US public from further invasion, but it also had a number of key problematic social effects, namely fostering suspicion and intolerance against immigrants in the US and recruiting the American public as surveillance agents in the service of national security. As Judith Butler suggests 'the population is asked to become a 'foot soldier' in Bush's army' (2004:39). Focusing on highlighting the traumatic elements of these social effects, and in an uncanny echo of the effects of Orwell's 'Ministry of Truth', Wodiczko's states that his work directly critiques,

the tragic effects of our "Ministry of Interior," U.S. Homeland Security, on the limits of our perception and imagination effected by the "interior" of our uninformed minds (our subjectivity), and most importantly on the invisible people, the working residents of our country who are struggling to survive the

³ *If You See Something...* was reconfigured in the European context in 2009 for the 53rd Venice Biennale and re-titled *Guests*. See Lajer-Burcharth 2009.

U.S. government's unjust actions conducted against them in the name of the war on terror. (2008a:174)⁴

If You See Something... is a large-scale indoor projection consisting of video images of four tall semi-opaque windows projected onto the interior walls of the gallery. Behind the windows, unidentifiable figures move and talk with each other, their conversations conveyed through an audio track in which we hear of the traumatic circumstances of their lives born of the pain of experiencing immigration in a post-9/11 America and its attendant regulatory, and largely debilitating legal and cultural effects. We hear stories such as: a man's extended deportation process which has kept him from his family for five years; a young man beaten by authorities who remains silent about his experience from fear of repercussions; and a woman who explains how her Lebanese husband was sent back to Lebanon, abandoning his marriage after continued harassment. In what Guilianna Bruno describes as 'a form of digital shadow theater' (2014: 76), the work invites the viewer to bear witness to these stories and figures in an ambiguous audio-visual framework that mediates the stories of trauma through the unstable architectural boundary of the window suggesting that it is 'not just the physical borders but the contours of the inner life of citizens are at stake, at risk' (op.cit).

As with most of Wodiczko's socio-political works, the alienating experience of immigration and the identification of immigrants as 'strangers' within dominant Western cultural contexts, such as the US or Europe is the focus of this work. Through the symbolic dialogue between the architectural elements of the wall and the window, Wodiczko sets up an interplay between stability and uncertainty, asking his viewers to

⁴ Wodiczko explicitly references the connection between Orwell and *If You See Something...* in a 2012 interview with Scapegoat journal where he comments 'It also refers obliquely to Orwell's windowless Ministry of Love in 1984, which housed Oceania's Thought Police. There you can only imagine what is inside, and when you are inside you don't see what is outside. In my piece you are trapped inside by the same Homeland Security that keeps those people outside. Like Homeland Security, the wall and the milky windows keep you from knowing what is going on. They can protect you from your own fears, or what Bush called "terror." In Polish, terror only refers to the outside world, but in English it can be inside you' (2012:7).

negotiate a blurred boundary between inside and outside space within the darkened interior of the gallery. Framing what Mark Jarzombek has called trauma's 'transgressive potential' (2006:60), the window images metaphorically puncture the gallery wall and establish a series of portals for the viewer to engage in close surveillance and observation of the traumatised subjects. As flat light projections, Wodiczko suggests the images allow the viewer 'to come close enough to these "strangers," who one usually does not notice', their indistinct appearance encouraging us 'to realize how incomplete our understanding and access to their experience is' (Wodiczko 2008:174). While the darkened space of the gallery intensifies the sense of interiority and evokes a psychological viewing space akin to cinema, Wodiczko subverts the stability of the wall, transforming it from 'a physical manifestation of a social order, (that serves) to reinforce that condition' to a borderzone that exposes the 'sense of alterity towards what is outside...(and the) sense of exclusion that is both social and physical' (Leach 1997: xix). The 'transgressive potential' of trauma thus applies equally to Wodiczko's use of the window as an architectural motif that manifests a transgression of boundaries that organize interior and exterior space and include or exclude certain inhabitants. As Bruno argues, 'as he forces us to confront who and what is inside and outside, he creates a window in which positions between outsider and insider may be not only mediated but shifted around' (Bruno 2014: 78).

In this work, the blurriness of the windows creates a sense of submerged, partially visible identities recalling psychoanalytic views of the unconscious as an other, a 'stranger' within the subject, or in Julia Kristeva's formulation the 'foreignness within us' (Kristeva 1988; Beardsworth 2004). As the windows effectively confuse who is inside or outside the walled space, Wodiczko asks his viewers to negotiate the space between the immigrant and themselves and the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion we harbour within our own perception. This is not a matter of swapping places with the other, as the viewer never enters, nor even sees the window clearly, but as Ewa Lajer-Burcharth argues, it is a matter of addressing

the deeper question of how identity is imagined. It is not, in other words, a question of getting rid of the self/other distinction in the processes of personal or collective self-definition, but rather a question of how the relation between the two may be recast. (2009)

In this sense, the work not only exposes the cultural dimensions of inclusion and exclusion but turns the practice of surveillance back against the viewer, asking them to negotiate an internal border within their own sense of self and reassess the relation between their socio-political identity and that of the immigrant. It provokes a confrontation with what Dominick LaCapra terms 'empathic unsettlement' (LaCapra 2001:41) a kind of secondary trauma felt when confronted with the trauma of the other, or as described by Jill Bennett 'the aesthetic experience of simultaneously *feeling for* another and becoming aware of a distinction between one's own perceptions and the experience of the other' (Bennett 2005:8). As such, the crossing of borders that is central to the experience of immigration becomes an internal process required of the viewer, a process that also subverts the slogan '*If You See Something*' by focusing the critical gaze back on the viewer's perception, and how this contributes to particular views of immigrants. By engaging the viewer in a more critical practice of 'seeing something', Wodiczko interrupts the gaze that looks suspiciously on the immigrant, transforming it into an alternative humanitarian gaze, fraught with the ambiguities and difficulties of human communication, but thereby allowing for the interplay between the spaces of self and other and the development of empathy. Through what Lajer-Burcharth terms a 'poetics of ambiguity' in Wodiczko's work, the primary sense is one of a mingling of boundaries that inform our ideas of psychological and political space, and questioning who controls the borders of perception – the government or its citizens? As Lajer-Burcharth writes:

Borders are...not merely physical entities that regulate the flow of people between different countries; they are also internalized, invisible divisions that structure people's imagination of themselves, especially their sense of who they are in relation to others. (2009)

Whilst the blurriness of the windows evokes this unsettling of political and psychological boundaries, the work never fully discloses the identities of the subjects on the other side or allows us to engage openly with them, opting instead to suspend the sense of ambiguity on the border. In line with the 'unknowable' space of trauma and its unrepresentability, the windows thus also convey the difficulties of fully knowing the trauma of the other. As Wodiczko explains 'we cannot imagine that we really understand their situation...but we should at least realize that their situation is impossible to comprehend by us' (2008b). Wodiczko utilises the gallery space as a critical site for the exchange of ideas about trauma and its production and regulation by 'external' authorities, utilising the window as a portal for negotiating an ambiguous zone of representation. Such strategies are part of Wodiczko's more general approach to creating spaces that mobilise the unsettled conditions of democracy and 'reanimate the implicit emancipatory demand for social freedoms in a democratic state' (Apel 2008:268). Moving on from the idea of trauma at the heart of the modern condition that we see in the Orwellian framework, Wodiczko's work identifies trauma as an integral feature of the conditions of democracy in post-modern political contexts and insists on its articulation as part of its practices.

The combined effect of the unsettled boundary between self and other and the democratic imperative of *If You See Something* is the quality of agonism and a recognition of differences through processes that are 'constructively adversarial' (Wodiczko in Phillips 2003:34). Wodiczko states 'democracy cannot be organized in a well-mannered way without room for confrontations and a multiplicity of voices' (op.cit). In light of this, the voices of *If You See Something...* represent something of an adversarial narrative that confronts the viewer through the unsettling articulation of trauma, and offers an opposing, albeit fragmented perspective on the targets of the US security campaign's gaze. Such agonism works to make visible the processes of repression upon which such political campaigns depend to achieve their aims. Such an unsettling space is aligned with Foucault's concept of power as 'a relationship which is

at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle, less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation' (1982: 790). Whilst the illusory quality of the projections and the impenetrability of the wall suggest an impasse in agency both for the viewer and the immigrants through the window, the work maintains a tension that aligns with Foucault's conception that

'(e)very power relation implies, at least in potentia, a strategy of struggle, in which the two forces are not super-imposed, do not lose their specific nature, or do not finally become confused. Each constitutes for the other a kind of permanent limit, a point of possible reversal.' (Foucault 1982: 794)

By transforming the gallery space into a socio-political space, Wodiczko's work challenges the institutional spaces of representation across political and psychological borders, and allows the potential for a humanitarian dialogue to emerge from the threshold between the interior of the art gallery and the public gaze. The deliberate omission of the 'say something' in the campaign slogan from the title of the work, suggests that whatever is to be said will be up to the viewer to initiate and direct not towards the needs of the government, but to the broader and more complex needs of the community. *If You See Something...* thus encourages a kind of political agency in the viewer and asks them to acknowledge that, '(d)emocratic logic is one of inclusion-exclusion, and failing to acknowledge the closure that produces the space of the political community means forgetting the Other' (Deutsche 2002: 38).

In all the works discussed so far, the formal and spatial dynamics of the works create uncertainty and suspension through unresolved tensions between interior and exterior architectural spaces. In Doris Salcedo's *Shibboleth* we encounter similar tensions, but also some different elements arising from the expansive spatial effects of the work and its reference to structures of power. The installation site of the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall does not offer a direct reference to a specific bureaucratic or institutional power like the US government or the BBC as in the works of the other artists. Instead, it references a broader framework of power implicated in the massive

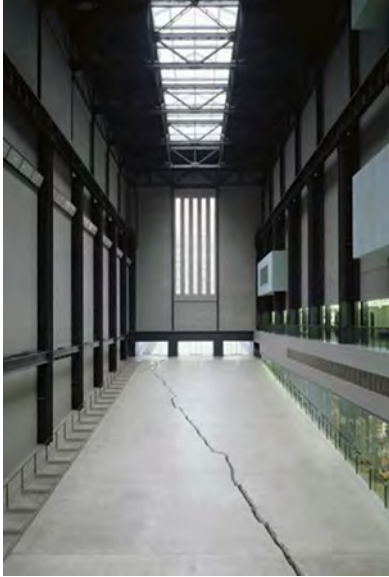


Fig. 5: Doris Salcedo *Shibboleth* (2007)
Concrete and fence wire, 167m approx,
(detail), Turbine Hall, Tate Modern,

scale of the hall itself which has been associated with the dominant forces of imperialism and racism by Salcedo (2008) or with other power relations associated with the building and industrialism in the West (Bal 2010: 234). Whilst the specificity of power relations is less identifiable in *Shibboleth* than the other works discussed in this chapter, I suggest it shares an approach to architecture that transgresses spatial boundaries in order to mobilize ‘space so that it can become political space’ (Bal 2010: 236).

Commissioned for the Unilever series in the Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall in 2007, *Shibboleth* was a large scale sculptural installation consisting of a single crack in the gallery floor, shifting in depth and breadth in a meandering fissure from one end of the 167 metre floor space to the other (Fig. 5). As is often noted, unlike other object-based works commissioned for this space (such as Louise Bourgeois’ ‘I Do/ I Undo/ I Redo’, 2000-1, or Rachel Whiteread’s ‘Embankment’ 2005-6) Salcedo’s *Shibboleth* was a direct intervention into the architectural structure of the gallery that, rather than filling up the space effectively left it empty, and sought rather to interrupt the foundations of the architecture itself.

Unlike the works discussed above, the crack in the floor of the Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall that constitutes *Shibboleth* in its entirety, confronts the viewer with a palpable image of division itself, a ruptured foundation, and ultimately a point of no return. Salcedo’s engagement with architecture in this work is part of her more recent engagement with site-specific practices, and as Elizabeth Adan suggests it continues her ‘rigorously politicised aesthetic practice that investigates the forces and after-effects of political oppression in both individual and social terms’ (2010: 585). In *Shibboleth*, as in her other work, the sense of the after-effects of power is rendered in

a form that suggests loss through architectural fragmentation and the haunting effects of a traumatic event that has already occurred. As the work retains a sense of uncertainty around the fate of the subject or inhabitant, and purposely maintains an unsettling space of inhabitation, it is in line with Avery Gordon's notion of haunting which she says,

is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life, especially when they are over and done with (slavery, for instance) or when their oppressive nature is denied (as in free labor or national security). (2008: xvi)

On a symbolic level, embedding such a large-scale work in the Turbine Hall can be read as a critical site-specific response to the monumentality of the Hall and the ideals of industrial power and modernity it represents. Originally built as part of the Bankside Power Station, (built 1947 - 1963) the scale of the hall reflects its function as a space that housed the generators of the power station but which now, somewhat ironically, generates a different kind of cultural power as one of the most significant and powerful arts organization in Britain. In a subversive gesture, *Shibboleth* not only underscored the monumental scale of the space by intervening in the floor and foregrounding the structural dynamics of the architecture, but through the symbol of the crack metaphorically destabilized the foundations upon which such cultural power is built.⁵ Counter-acting the hall's capacity to represent Britain's industrial power, Salcedo's work queries the conditions of this power by inscribing the broadly symbolic gesture of the crack in the floor and thus symbolically interrupting the foundations of its history. Such an 'interruptive' gesture (see Adan 2010) both destabilises the specific British claim to imperial prowess, but also, as a symbol of structural collapse the crack alludes further to a non-specific cultural field where the effects of imperial power can be understood as divisive, corrosive and unsettled in a generalised sense. The crack

⁵ Although the sculpture intervenes directly in the material of the floor, it does not compromise the actual architectural stability of the Turbine Hall in any way, hence such destabilization is metaphorical not literal. Salcedo has commented on the rare 'tolerance' required by the Director of the Tate, Nicholas Serota to take on and mount such an interventionist work, which after the installation ended, was filled in and now appears as a permanent 'scar' in the floor. See Bal 2010 and Ward 2007 for further commentary on these aspects.

thus offers an expansive metaphor that is not limited to the British context but rather extends to a broader state of precariousness, one which Salcedo asks her viewer to negotiate as they encounter the work in the space. In these ways, Mieke Bal has suggested *Shibboleth* provides a distinctly 'anti-monumental gesture', that in leaving the hall empty effectively fills it 'with the entire world – with the scar tissue of its divisions, histories, differences and repressions' (2010: 238). By alluding to the traumatic effects that underpin the operation of imperial power, Salcedo asks her viewer to negotiate the architecture, not by looking at what fills it, its function or its history, but by looking at the conditions upon which it was built.

Unlike the other works discussed above, the type of power alluded to in the work relates more to the broad category of imperialism and less to the specific government (Wodiczko and Schneider) or bureaucratic (Whiteread) structures referenced in the other works. The architectural crack is a symbolic gesture with enough singularity and scope to encompass the sign of imperialism. As Bal comments, the work 'is not a sign or representation of something. It signifies nothing, and at the same time, because of that negativity, everything' (2010: 236). As a focus for the divisive effects of imperialism, the concept of the shibboleth refers to a phrase or word, which, depending on variations in pronunciation is used to differentiate between members of certain social or ethnic groups⁶. Within an imperialist power structure it works as a kind of policing device, a surveillance test of sorts to determine boundaries of cultural intelligibility and belonging, and regulating processes of social inclusion and exclusion. For those whose pronunciation of the shibboleth fails to conform to the dominant cultural requirements, the implications of social exclusion can be devastating as it

⁶ The term 'shibboleth' has its roots in the book of Judges 12:6 in which the Galatians identify the Ephraimites, who are trying to flee, by asking them to pronounce the word 'Shibboleth' which the Ephraimites pronounce 'Sibboleth'. The word was used to separate the Ephraimites from the Gileadites before and after the bloody massacre where 42,000 Ephraimites were slain. In its aftermath, all remaining Ephraimites attempting to cross the river Jordan were also slain after being unable to pronounce the 'sh' of the password, 'Shibboleth'. Salcedo also points out that such a test is not limited to the Bible, stating that 'in Colombia during the fight for independence, the Spanish place name Zaragoza was used, because we pronounce it "Saragosa" whereas a Spanish person would pronounce it "Tharagotha".' (Salcedo in Ward 2007).

relegates them to the space of otherness with 'no access to the alterity that underwrites subjectivity' (Fuss 1995: 143).

Whilst the Turbine Hall is a symbol of modern progress and industrial prowess in London's architectural history, Salcedo's approach to this history highlights the human experience that underwrites such progress. By giving the concept of the shibboleth spatial form, Salcedo suggests that the history of modernity is built on a type of power that divides and excludes people from each other and from certain cultural and institutional spaces and hence deprives them of power. As a site-specific work, *Shibboleth* refers to the divisions in the narratives of European history and its neglect of the histories of those it relegates as 'Other' - the citizens of the non-European 'third world', but also those within its borders, immigrants from countries who are marginalised, excluded and vilified on the basis of race, ethnicity and/or gender. Salcedo remarks that the history of modernity is also 'the history of racism...modernity is seen as an exclusively European event' (Salcedo in Adan 2010: 593). She further suggests the invisible workings of power within modernity have entailed the suppression of the histories of racism, which have been 'disregarded, marginalized, or simply obliterated' (op. cit).

Within the gallery space, Salcedo positions her viewer in a way that invites them to trace the trajectory of these lost or unrepresented histories along the crack that extends through the entire space. Such a position is a precarious one that highlights the danger in attempting to cross borders or negotiate imperialist systems of power that seek to divide and suppress. Stemming from the recognition of trauma as a hidden cost of imperialism, the work decentres the viewer's position and asks them to question their own position within the space of the gallery that is designed to be socially inclusive. The critical force of the work and the foundations of its political power lie in her configuration of the 'common ground' (see Bal 2010) of the gallery as

potentially treacherous territory. As such, Salcedo asks her viewer to negotiate the experience of the other not just as a boundary of perception as in Wodickzo's work, but as an extended space of division that literally unsettles our inhabitation of the gallery space and our shared ground. In this sense, Salcedo asks her viewer to negotiate the 'negative' space of experience that, like trauma threatens concepts of unity or stability that inform the imperialist enterprise and its attempt to form cohesive systems. *Shibboleth* thus alludes to the effects of trauma beyond any specific system or event, focusing instead on a broader question of the relationship between representation and history in the West, and how we account for the experiences of those who are excluded from its dominant narratives. As Salcedo comments, '(*Shibboleth*) represents borders, the experience of immigrants, the experience of segregation, the experience of racial hatred. ...It is the experience of a Third World person coming into the heart of Europe' (Artist's statement in Alberge 2007).

Reflecting on her process of researching the symbolic and political content of her work by interviewing victims about their experiences, Salcedo highlights the importance of the act of crossing a border into the space of the other through dialogue. She states:

When I'm working it's not only my own experience that counts; the experience of the victims of violence I have interviewed is an essential part of my work. Dialogue is crucial in this process; it is what allows me to know the experience of the Other, to the point at which an encounter with otherness in the field of sculpture is possible. (Salcedo in Basualdo 2000: 13)

In relation to her native homeland of Colombia, Salcedo has commented widely on the effects of the socio-economic conditions of the country and the impossibility of 'not seeing' the other due to widespread poverty, crime and injustice within its borders. As she states, 'life imposes upon you this awareness of the other. Violence, horror forces you notice the Other, to see others' suffering' (Basualdo 2000: 14). In the European context of *Shibboleth*, the crack Salcedo installs in the floor imposes this 'encounter

with otherness' within an institutional space that has historically concealed the traumas of imperialism. The key effect of the rupture in the floor space is the interruption of the homogenous gallery space designed to house our collective experience, and the imposition of a form that reminds us of the divisive practices underpinning that collectivity. Whilst the idea of 'Europe' as a homogenous cultural construct works to include those whose identity falls within the parameters of 'the European', it also works to engender fear of the immigrant as a transgressive and threatening subject. Salcedo remarks:

(t)he presence of the immigrant is always unwelcome...is seen as jeopardizing the culture of Europe. Europe has been seen as a homogeneous society, a democratic society that has learned through centuries of development, has learned to resolve the issues through dialogue. And if that is the case, then where do we place these outbreaks of racial hatred...I think (European) society is not so homogeneous and not so democratic and there are some people who are experiencing that. (Salcedo 2008)

Drawing on her own experience, and that of the victims she interviews Salcedo's *Shibboleth* installs the knowledge of the traumas of living in a third world country in a first world institutional space. The work is not just a critique of the hidden traumatic dimensions of European culture, the suppression of which protects its interests, but on a broader global scale, offers the collapsing of two cultural spaces, the first and the



Fig. 6: Doris Salcedo *Shibboleth* (2007)
Concrete and fence wire, 167m approx,
(detail), Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London.

third world under the roof of a dominant Western institution. The conceptual strength of the shibboleth in this respect lies in translating a divisive practice that has its basis in language into a problem of architectural space and by extension, our collective inhabitation and the question of who is included in this collective, and who is not. As the viewer negotiates the crack and can peer into the depth of the crevice and observe the materiality of

the earth and fencing wire that supports it, they witness the ‘epicentre of catastrophe’ (Salcedo 2008) and negotiate both the danger of crossing borders between countries under an imperial order, and a border between worlds. In this sense, the raw materiality of the interior space of the crack (Fig. 6) makes the work geographical in scope, referencing fence-lines that divide countries, or an earthquake of massive proportions that threatens our shared ground. In other ways, the fencing wire references strategies of imprisonment or segregation, recalling the concentration camp or other external sites of government suppression such as the detainee camps of Guantánamo Bay. In a pertinent link to the interests of Schneider’s work, Salcedo comments on the history of the concentration camp:

It was a Spanish invention actually. The first one was built in Cuba in 1896 by General Arsenio Martínez Campos. Then the British began to use concentration camps in the Boer War, followed by the Germans of course. Now it has come back full circle to Cuba, with Camp Delta in Guantánamo Bay. Fencing is so normal nowadays, it's everywhere, it's literally embedded in our lives and we don't even notice. (Salcedo in Ward 2007)⁷

Such political and material breadth is part of Salcedo’s imperative to create spaces that take us beyond our own subjective experience and the specificities of national contexts, and address the question of who or what controls these experiences and contexts, and what kinds of power relations produce them. In this sense, her work refuses to adhere to a concept of experience that is settled and knowable, but instead opens it up as a question. As she has commented on her conceptual practice more generally, ‘(w)hat also fascinated me was a type of knowledge that is greater than oneself; which is so broad spatially, and in terms of its volume and comprehensiveness, that one cannot even grasp its meaning’ (Basualdo 2000:11).

⁷ Salcedo also used fencing wire in her earlier work *Neither* (White Cube, London 2004) where she embedded it in plasterboard on the gallery walls. This work again left the gallery ‘empty’ of an object as such, directly intervening in the structural elements of the space as a means of conveying ‘a topography of confinement’ (Bal 2010: 230) and unsettling the interior/exterior parameters of the gallery.

By intervening directly in the floor, *Shibboleth* unsettles the foundations upon which imperialist perspectives are established and asks us whether we can continue to occupy such cultural spaces without confronting the dangers of doing so. In this sense, *Shibboleth* shares a similar imperative as Wodiczko's *If You See Something...* in asking the viewer not only to see how divisive practices of power produce otherness, but to understand that our relationship to this 'otherness' is precarious and the potential site of our own vulnerabilities. The uncontained form of the crack indicates both a disaster that has befallen our shared space, but one which without due attention may continue to divide and unsettle us. By directly undermining the stability of the architectural structure of the hall, *Shibboleth* establishes an encounter with an imperial power that questions our safe inhabitation of the space and frames our experience of the work as one in which we literally must 'go across danger'.

Conclusion: Political implications

All the works in this chapter address critical questions about how we perceive trauma as a product of institutional structures of power. Through the construction of architectural spaces that evoke experiences of division, the works ask us to encounter an unsettled boundary between ourselves and others that exposes our own position as viewers socially and at times physically precarious. In Schneider's *Weisse Folter* and Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* such precariousness is evoked as a moral or imaginative space where the difficulties of inhabiting the works reflect conflicts between agency and powerlessness in relation to an invisible and omnipotent structure of power. In Salcedo's *Shibboleth* and Wodiczko's *If You See Something...*, the architectural components of the window, wall and floor become borders that divide us from the traumatic experiences of others, but which each artist asks us to negotiate as a matter of political urgency. Where *Shibboleth* presents us with an architectural dilemma as a platform upon which we might negotiate the social bond ruptured in the wake of power, Wodiczko's *If You See Something...* perhaps offers the

more optimistic possibility of renewing the boundaries between social groups through the humanitarian gestures of recognising difference and empathy. In the absence or uncertain identity of the traumatised other, all the works engage with architectural space and form as a means of activating an extrasubjective gesture towards the other 'to dent the barrier that prevents people... who haven't experienced such deplorable places and practices from empathizing with those who have' (Eichler 2007).

As with the works discussed in Chapter One, the question of whether the art gallery as an institutional space can frame the politics of trauma in ways that engage with knowledges and practices beyond its boundaries remains unresolved. In the different ways they critique or subvert elements of the gallery architecture and expose the uncertainty of its parameters - the blurry windows and cracked floor of Wodiczko's and Salcedo's works and the concealed spaces of Whiteread's and Schneider's - the works present the gallery as an unsettled representational space in which we might experience the traumatic potential of power. Experiencing the jarring or divisive effects of inhabiting such an unsettled space adds an element of urgency or anxiety to the political force of the works, particularly in light of the fact that the traumas to which they refer continue beyond the gallery walls in the institutions that regulate the legal and political status of individuals in our present day city and community spaces. Whilst the interplay between interior and exterior spaces in the works transforms the distance encountered by the viewer estranged from the traumatic event into a relation of precarious proximity, there is still a sense of hidden spaces, elements of experience concealed within the architecture that, despite our proximity, we still cannot see or access. As inhabiting these spaces only ever allows us to see a part, and not their whole, the works thus ask us to consider who is missing from the space that we as viewers so rightfully occupy as gallery visitors. Through the absence of traumatised subjects of torture or the ghostly, uncertain presence of those subjected to racial prejudice, they ask who are the unaccounted for, who are the subjects, the 'strangers' who do not appear and whose lives are still subjected to precarious

boundaries beyond the limits of public knowledge? In this sense, the exposing and concealing of spatial boundaries in the works tests the limits of our perception and challenges our own relationship as inhabitants of institutions that decide who and what experiences can be represented in our shared spaces.

Chapter Three

Precarious Memorials: Unsettling the Present

Violence has always been present, one just needs a certain way of looking, of seeing certain things in order to unveil this presence.

(Doris Salcedo in Wong 2007:185)

Can art help establish ways of seeing that do not seek to reduce the impact of exposure? What kind of vision might overcome apathy and respond to the suffering of others? In short, what is public vision?

(Rosalyn Deutsche 2010:64)

In the first chapter, I discussed how the temporal problem at the heart of trauma relates to the uncanny and the interruption of the present by past phenomena. I argued that Whiteread's and Schneider's interiors present this temporal rupture as a spatial problem and that through installation their work suggests ways of approaching the political dimensions of trauma and extrasubjective space. This chapter picks up this thread, but focuses specifically on works located outside the gallery in public space, where political meanings of the works are forged through their site-specific engagement with architecture and implicating the viewer in the politics of public space. As all the works in this chapter were created in the last fifteen years, they can be linked to a recent shift in conceptual relations between history and trauma through which memory is being theorised in increasingly social terms (Bennett and Kennedy 2003; Huyssen 2003). The conceptual focus of this chapter is thus on how the works relate to this shift, particularly through elements of testimony, 'modes of representation better suited to the 'unrepresentability' of trauma than realism' and engaging with 'psychoanalytic understandings of trauma's

belatedness to reveal testimony to trauma's traceless traces 'after' the event' (Radstone 2007: 21).

In the first section of the chapter I discuss three commemorative works all made within a three year time frame and which refer to different traumatic events in twentieth century history – Whiteread's *Holocaust Memorial* aka *Nameless Library* (2000) commemorating the lost lives of Austrian Jews in the Holocaust, Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) which commemorated the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945, and Salcedo's *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002) which commemorated the siege of Bogotá's Palace of Justice in 1985 by the M-19 guerilla group where at least 240 people were killed. All these works are site-specific and respond to the traumatic event via an engagement with the particular architectural forms and spaces associated with its history. Through their engagement with architectural sites associated with the disappearance or loss of human life, all three works bear characteristics of the counter-monument form as discussed by Young (1992), and frame the problem of representing traumatic memory as a problem of inhabitation. I suggest that whilst all the works align the memory of trauma with elements of uninhabitability, their architectural elements also convey a persistence of the problem of trauma and its place in public space. I argue that the architectural sites of these works represent an element of survival through which trauma is invested with what Mieke Bal has called 'cultural duration' (2010: 221), providing a space on, or through which, such duration can take place.

In the second section I consider three other works in which I suggest we can see a shift away from trauma's conceptual 'home' in major events of twentieth century history, and towards its relocation in the present through the identification of civilian traumas occurring in contemporary cities. In his *Bunker Hill Monument, Boston* (1998) and *Tijuana Projection* (2001) Wodiczko foregrounds the effects of traumatic experiences associated with contemporary civilian murder in the city of Boston, and racial and gender inequality and social injustice in the Mexican border-city of Tijuana respectively. Whilst these works retain a connection to the past via that articulation

of past experiences by their participants, I argue that their focus on recent traumas as distinct from major historical events such as World War Two, fosters a space for acknowledging the presence of trauma in contemporary spaces and forming a political bond with others. Although Wodiczko utilises the historic Bunker Hill monument to explore the effects of present day trauma in Boston in his 1998 work, I suggest his use of Tijuana's Cultural Centre building in the later work, marks a shift away from using traditional memorial forms and spaces in favour of a distinctly civilian space, an arts centre not usually associated with the traumatic experiences relayed by the participants in the projection. Located approximately five kilometres from the US/Mexico international border, I suggest Wodiczko's use of this site is an attempt to inscribe trauma into the fabric of everyday social life by activating the symbolic tensions between the building's function as a site of high cultural activity, and the troubled activities of illegal trade and exploitation of human life associated with the nearby border.

This shift away from traditional memorial forms and monuments and towards everyday civilian spaces is further explored in Salcedo's *Eighth International Istanbul Biennale* installation (2003) where she filled a demolition site in Istanbul with 1,550 chairs. I suggest that through the combination of the architectural void and the large-scale stack of wooden chairs Salcedo moves away from any identifiable historical referent and points instead to an anonymous space of trauma, which she has claimed is closer to a 'topography of war' (Salcedo 2010). In this work, I suggest the choice of site is part of Salcedo's resistance to identifying the specific details of particular historic events, in favour of spaces that evoke trauma via metaphoric rather than memorial strategies as she claims 'I do not think it's important to know the event, ...I'm just addressing experiences' (Salcedo 2010). My discussion focuses on how the more recent works of Wodiczko and Salcedo thus engage with architectural sites and spaces as a means of exploring the conditions of trauma as a contemporary experience, and mediating a space where the force of trauma is aimed less at understanding the specifics of memory or the event, and more at mobilising a space for recognising the ubiquitous presence of trauma in our

contemporary cities. As such, my interest relates to how Salcedo's and Wodiczko's architectural interventions engage the power of trauma to draw our attention to our shared inhabitation of the city, not as the alienating space of the individual as we find in the modernist view, but a space in which we must attend to our common humanity and social relationships as a matter of public urgency.

Throughout the chapter I retain a focus on how the works themselves bear continuing witness to the legacy of Theodor W. Adorno's much discussed essay about the ethics of artistic representation after the Holocaust in which he claimed 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric' (1967:19). In this context, the public nature of the works alludes to the persistence of questions of how and why to represent trauma in ways that ask us to rethink the relation between art as a mode of witnessing and what Butler terms our 'ethical obligation' to the suffering of others (Butler 2004; 2012). Overall the chapter thus considers whether the relationship between trauma and architecture has a particular power in contemporary art to challenge dominant spaces of trauma and their alignment with the legacies of the past and provide access to an unsettled globalised communal space that can respond to 'a sense of political community of a complex order' (Butler 2004: 22).

Unsettled Memorials

Since the end of World War Two, approaches to representing the Holocaust in aesthetic fields have foregrounded two related concerns – the space of trauma as a representational and formal problem and the history of the Holocaust's events and processes of personal and collective memory. As much trauma theory emerged in response to the testimonies of survivors, these concerns have revolved around subjective dilemmas associated with processing such an experience, but also the 'passing on' of such traumatic history to subsequent generations or what Marianne Hirsch has called 'postmemory' (1999:8). The representational problems of the Holocaust are historical and symbolic, relating both to the fact that '(t)he symbolic order offered no terms, positions, or frames by which the Holocaust could be experienced, because these events had no precedent whatsoever' (van Alphen

1997:55) and to questions of how and who should represent such histories, and particularly after Adorno, whether it was ethical to do so.

Appearing at the end of his 1949 essay 'Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft', Adorno's comment on the problem of art after Auschwitz - 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric' (1967:19) - has been the subject of varying translations and interpretations (Martin 2006; Kyriakides 2005; Bal 2010; Luckhurst 2008). Often mis-interpreted as a prohibitory gesture against the artist, his essay¹ responded to the ethical and cultural difficulties of representing the trauma of the Holocaust via systems of artistic representation, particularly as they related to finding forms that could convey the impossibility of trauma's representation. Elaine Martin (2006) and Roger Luckhurst (2008) both argue that rather than prohibiting the artist, Adorno's essay identifies the penalty that art, and all civilised culture would pay in responding to the Holocaust's atrocities by forging new spaces for acknowledging the failures of civilisation within its forms. As Martin suggests, the challenge for art after Auschwitz was not that it cannot respond, but that as the pinnacle of civilisation and representative of the ideals of autonomy denied by the Holocaust, art must itself 'bear witness to its predestined failure...(and) ... present the fact that the 'unrepresentable' exists' (Martin 2006:11). Roger Luckhurst elaborates;

For Adorno, all Western culture is at once contaminated by and complicit with Auschwitz, yet the denial of culture is equally barbaric. If silence is no option either, Adorno sets art and cultural criticism the severe, and paradoxical imperative of finding ways of representing the unrepresentable' (2008: 5).

Such representational concerns were a focus for artists of the post-war period such as Anselm Kiefer, Joseph Beuys and Christian Boltanski, all of whom have engaged with the 'Holocaust effects' (see van Alphen 1997) of haunting and loss through their use of symbolic materials and forms. Whilst these artists engaged with critiques of the Holocaust through concepts of ideological and cultural decay, particular

¹ Adorno also reflected on the issue of representing the Holocaust in his later works - *Negative Dialectics* (1966), *Ohne Leitbild* (1967) and *Noten zur Literatur IV* (1974).

concerns about collective memory and the transmission of traumatic history through generations, developed a critical focus in debates about the monument and/or memorial and its role in public space (Young 1992). Emerging largely in response to ideas about the unrepresentability of the Holocaust and the paradox identified by Adorno about 'the imperative to represent the egregious crimes and the impossibility of doing so' (Martin 2006: 2), the counter-monument movement sought to subvert the traditional iconography of monuments and the ideals of



Fig 1: Horst Hoheisel, *Negative Form Monument* (1987) Aschrott Brunnen Fountain, Kassel, Germany.

heroism or nationalism they often imply, through a negation of their formal and conceptual parameters of singularity, presence and memory. Key works such as Horst Hoheisel's negative form Aschrott Brunnen Fountain Monument (1987: Fig. 1) or Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz's *The Hamburg Monument Against War and Fascism and for Peace*, (1986: Fig. 2), subvert the presence of the monument through strategies of disappearance and spatial and formal inversions. Other works such as Jochen Gerz's *Invisible Monument* or *2146 Stones: Monument Against Racism* (1990) convey the impossibility of representing the Holocaust through an invisible 'monument' marked only through the words and actions of contemporary civilians. As part of a broad cultural concern to avoid amnesia and testify to the complex histories of the Holocaust, the counter-monument movement fostered its own aesthetic and



Fig. 2: Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz *The Hamburg Monument Against War and Fascism and for Peace* (1986) Hamburg, Germany.

political fields for exploring Adorno's insistence that post-Holocaust art must acknowledge the coexistence of art's necessity but also its impossibility in representing the horror of the Holocaust.

Rachel Whiteread's *Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library* (2000)

Rachel Whiteread's *Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library* (2000) entered into this complex field of relations as the winning commission for Vienna's Judenplatz memorial to commemorate the 65,000 Jewish victims of the Nazi regime in Austria². The memorial represents the cast interior space of a domestic-scale library³ lined with books that Whiteread has rendered as positive casts, but constructed with their spines turned inward and hence anonymous and unable to be identified. The plinth at the base of the monument is inscribed with the names of the concentration



Fig. 3: Rachel Whiteread *Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library* (2000) Concrete and steel, 10 x 7 x 3.8m, Judenplatz Vienna, Austria.

camps where many Jews perished and the doors to the library are cast without handles or hinges, rendering the interior space symbolically inaccessible and uninhabitable. In its inversion of space and the inaccessibility of the traumatic history to which it refers, the memorial bears the markers of a counter-monument

and the attempt to represent the sense of absence, loss and meaninglessness attributed to the Holocaust. Whiteread's casting of the negative space of a library aligns the conceptual meaning of the work with the aporia of trauma and the failure of the traumatic experience to be registered in the present as well as the 'negative' conceptual space of all that a library symbolises - knowledge, civilisation and history. As the Jewish people are traditionally known as 'the people of the book' (see Carley 2010; Young 2004) the book motif is specifically aligned with Jewish history and can found in other memorial works such as Micha Ullman's memorial, *Bibliothek* (1995) in the Bebelplatz, Berlin (Fig. 4) commemorating the Nazi book burnings of 1933, a work eerily echoed by Whiteread's more abstract *Untitled (Paperbacks)* (1997). The

² Whiteread won the commission in 1995, but due to a series of political and aesthetic debates it sparked about its historical purpose for Austria and its position in the Judenplatz, the work took another 5 years to complete. See Young 2004.

³ Unlike some of her early architecture-based work preceding this commission such as *Ghost* and *House* the *Holocaust Memorial* is not cast from an actual architectural site but a framework that was constructed especially for the project. It's scale is however modeled on the rooms from the residential architecture in the surrounding buildings of the Judenplatz.

unreadable books in the Judenplatz thus symbolise an absent community with multiple unrepresentable spaces in its history, not only creating an uninhabitable void in the public space of the Judenplatz but, as Young has suggested, a symbol of the 'literal space between the book and us' (2004: 166). The work's double title '*Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library*' also indicates a space between the conventions of the memorial and the 'unnameable' histories it seeks to represent suggesting the work continually negotiates the aporia of trauma and the difficulties of 'representing the unrepresentable'.

As discussed in Chapter One, the formal inversions of Whiteread's work displace the body of the viewer and render her sculptures uninhabitable. Where the displacement of the viewer from her domestic spaces can be aligned with uncertainty in the space of home, her memorial relates such uncertainty to the spaces of memory and history and



Fig. 4: Micha Ullman *Bibliothek* (1995)
Cement and glass, Bebelplatz, Berlin.

the difficulties of forming knowledge in traumatic experience. In line with the force of trauma, the exclusion of the viewer suggests that if traumatic experience is not able to be processed into knowledge internally, memory is not only unable to be formed, but is pushed to the external realm. As Pierre Nora comments, 'the less memory is experienced from the inside the more it exists only through its exterior scaffolding and outward signs' (1989:13). Whiteread's memorial constructs an externalised position for the viewer by excluding them from the internal space of the work, and thereby reinforcing their position within the public space of Judenplatz and the network of relations between the spatial and historical dynamics sustained within the site. The spatial and symbolic inversions of the work are intimately tied to the history of the Judenplatz and the layers of traumatic history in the architecture surrounding the work. As Rachel Carley writes, Whiteread's design 'strategically unfolds and involutes condensed layers of historical, cultural and architectural activity specific to the project's particular site and surrounding context' (2010: 24). As such, part of the work's effectiveness as a counter-monument lies in the eviction

of the viewer from the space of the work and harnessing the capacity of trauma to activate or connect them to the multiple histories within the square.

Commissioned in 1995, the construction of the memorial was intended to be completed in 1996, but was delayed for five years due to controversies after the excavation of architectural remains of a synagogue in the Judenplatz. The synagogue dates to the medieval period and its destruction is linked to the "Viennese Geserah" of 1420/21 in which a violent campaign of persecution against Viennese Jews culminated in their mass suicide inside the synagogue, a decision taken to avoid renouncing their faith. After the excavation, the Jewish community in Vienna was divided about the siting of Whiteread's work on top of the synagogue's remains but



Fig. 5: Rachel Whiteread *Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library* (2000) Site view with statue of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing by Siegfried Charoux (1968) in foreground, Judenplatz, Vienna, Austria.

ultimately resolved to allow both structures to exist as memorials, although the position of Whiteread's memorial was adjusted so that it does not completely cover the space containing the ruins beneath. The remains of the synagogue can be accessed by visitors to the Judenplatz through stairs located in the Misrachi house, one of the surrounding buildings now housing the Museum Judenplatz⁴.

The interplay between internal and external boundaries within Whiteread's work is given added dimension by this subterranean siting of the synagogue ruins beneath it, an element that further enhances the sense of hidden or invisible histories.

Such symbolic layering of traumatic history in the Judenplatz is further elaborated by the monument of German Enlightenment poet Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (Fig. 5) by Siegfried Charoux, the original casting of which was destroyed by the Nazis in 1939 and melted down for weaponry. The statue that stands in the square today is a re-casting of the statue completed by Charoux in 1968 but which was not located again

⁴ The Misrachi House at Judenplatz 8 is a branch of the Jewish Museum Vienna, housing information and exhibits about the history of the Judenplatz, the pogrom of 1421 and the names of the 65,000 Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

in the Judenplatz until 1981. The symbolic dynamics of the site are perhaps most potent in the relationship between the inverted books of Whiteread's memorial and the statue of Lessing which draws together the histories of trauma that have prevented the writing of Jewish history and Adorno's questioning of poetry's (or art's) capacity to represent trauma after Auschwitz. The juxtaposition between the unreadable books and the recast Lessing statue points to a sustained boundary between the political demand to commemorate the Holocaust and the unsettled historical and representational ground upon which such a demand is built. In the sculptural dialogue within the site, the relationship between the civilised world personified in Lessing and its dreadful culmination in the events of the Holocaust referenced in Whiteread's memorial, transforms the Judenplatz into a space where the history of trauma is constantly being rewritten through public memory and our inhabitation of the site.

The combination of these historical, architectural and sculptural elements in the Judenplatz activates a framework of externalised site-specific relations through which multiple histories are displaced and constantly reconfigured. The mnemonic processes and politics of commemoration that became intimately entwined with the difficulties associated with the construction of Whiteread's memorial combine with the material histories of the site to create an unsettled meeting point of several sets of relations that defy any singular history of the Jewish people, or any 'representable' notion of trauma. Not only does Whiteread's memorial testify to the impossibility of representing the multiple histories of the Holocaust in a singular monument, but by excluding the viewer from the interior of the work also asks them to bear witness to the different histories of trauma in the Judenplatz. In the extended dialogue between histories, trauma in the Judenplatz is not something lost in the unconscious or buried in 'History', but an externalised force to be negotiated through the viewer's relation to public space. As Rachel Carley notes, unlike the imperative of counter-memorials to 'stage a disappearing act', Whiteread's memorial is not 'subsumed within the subterranean realm' but rather 'imposes itself unequivocally within the public domain' (2010: 27). In full acknowledgement of art's limitations

under the formal demands of Adorno's dialectic I suggest Whiteread's work sustains the viewer in an active memorial space, highlighting Adorno's requirement that any art after Auschwitz attend to both the necessity of representing suffering and the difficulties of doing so. Whiteread's memorial thus emerges not as an act of barbarism or closure, but a means of asking the viewer to inhabit trauma's unsettled critical opening. In its multiple relationships with other trauma sites in the Judenplatz, it testifies to Austria's cultural requirement to resist amnesia and acknowledge the difficulties of representing the continuing effects of the Holocaust on our sense of history. As Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman suggest, the enormity of the Holocaust created a sense of a 'history that is *not over*, a history whose repercussions are not simply omnipresent (whether consciously or not) in all our cultural activities, but whose traumatic consequences are still actively *evolving*' (1992: xiv).

Time-based memorials: Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) and Salcedo's *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002)

In contrast to the permanent installation of Whiteread's memorial, the idea that traumatic history can be contained within a singular history or monument is challenged through the temporary interruption of public space and time in Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) and Salcedo's *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002). Both works are site-specific commemorative works that construct commemoration as an event that unfolds over time, rather than something that can be contained or focused on a particular object, image or ritualised process of mourning. Whilst they both took place to mark the anniversaries of major historical traumatic events - the 1945 bombing of Hiroshima and the siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá 1985 - they evoke the memory of these events as a fragile, precarious process that, although fixed temporarily to a 'permanent' architectural site, is fragmented and uncertain. Through their temporary durational frameworks and the impermanent, fleeting nature of their sculptural and performative elements, these works can be identified within the tradition of counter-monuments as they resist any sense of containment within time or space.

In contrast to the shifting histories of trauma associated with the Judenplatz and the Holocaust in Whiteread's memorial, Salcedo's and Wodiczko's works engage with the architectural sites affected directly by the historical event. As such, the buildings - the A-Bomb Dome in Hiroshima and the rebuilt Palace of Justice in Bogotá - have already undergone a significant transformation during the process of the traumatic event and may be described as 'trauma sites' defined by Patrizia Violi as an index of the historical event that took place and 'an essential part of their inherent and constructed meaning, not to say the very reason for their existence' (2012:39). In line with the difficulties surrounding the subjective processing of the experience of trauma, the 'original' buildings are sites of loss – they cannot be fully located or recovered (except in photographs) and have been partially or fully erased by the event. As with Whiteread's work however, Wodiczko's and Salcedo's works engage with these sites of loss as frameworks through which public approaches to the event can be mediated. Despite their unsettled foundations, or perhaps due to them, the buildings continue to critically inform the history and contemporary function of the cities of Hiroshima and Bogotá and thus convey a sense of permanence and continuity to which the works refer and from which they initiate a number of socio-political questions about the place of trauma in contemporary contexts. As such I suggest the affective power of both works to inform the present derives from their unsettled architectural foundations. Through these foundations, they ask the viewer to approach traumatic history in a similar framework to the counter-monument, as both 'a wound and as an open question' (Hoheisel in Young 1993:43).

Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) took place on the two nights following the anniversary of the 1945 bombing of Hiroshima (August 7 and 8), at the A-Bomb Dome ruin, the site that marks the epicentre of the explosion and one of only a few architectural structures left in the city after the event. Wodiczko's forty-minute projection⁵ involved the combination of an audio track of recorded testimonies from

⁵ The whole projection lasted forty minutes, but each night it was played three times during the course of the evening. The audio and visual components of the 15 testimonies had been pre-recorded during the course of the year leading up to

fifteen citizens of Hiroshima who were interviewed by Wodiczko about their memory of the bombing and its after-effects on them as contemporary inhabitants of the city, and video images of their hands taken during the interview, projected onto the river-wall directly below the ruin that marks the boundary of the Motoyasu River (see Fig. 6). In the event of the bombing, the river itself was a traumatic and ultimately lethal



Fig. 6: Krzysztof Wodiczko *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) Public projection, video and sound installation, A-Bomb Dome, Hiroshima, Japan.

site as citizens who had been burnt by the bomb immersed themselves in the water, only to perish from radiation. Wodiczko's projection positioned the viewer on the riverbank opposite the ruin so

that their gaze was directed across two trauma sites – the river and the ruin, both of which in present-day Hiroshima convey a sense of continuity and survival and frame the moving images of the hands between them. Neither the hands of survivors nor the viewer are located within the building, a strategy that externalises the space of trauma and constructs the building as a traumatised witness and survivor, or as some commentators have suggested, a fragmented body (Saltzman 2006; Deutsche 2010). Whilst it can be argued that the work 'reanimates' the site through the projection of the images and audio, it also displaces the body from the place of shelter by locating the images of the hands below the building. This subterranean location of the hands suggests an unconscious space, and recalls Vidler's concept of the 'building in pain' in which he suggests,

the body no longer serves to centre, to fix or to stabilize. (The building's) limits, interior or exterior, seem infinitely ambiguous and extensive; ...its power lies no longer in the model of unity, but in the intimation of the fragmentary, the morsellated, the broken. (1990: 3)

the projection and were played in a synchronized format throughout the projection. Over the two nights about four thousand people attended to watch the projection from the riverbank opposite the A-Bomb Dome (see Deutsche 2010).

Configured by the violence of the bomb, the A-Bomb Dome thus already defies the containment of a building designed for shelter and the civilised functioning of a city. In its collapsed spatial boundaries, Dariusz Gafijczuk suggests the ruin can 'trigger a collapse in various dimensions of experience' evoking a 'transdimensional presence' that 'allows the past to emerge in the moment of our encounter with the 'afterlife' of various events' (2013: 150-151). The formal dimensions of the ruin thus literally provide a material 'opening' that symbolically encompasses the collapse of temporal boundaries that occur in trauma and the impossibility of fully inhabiting its space. As Gafijczuk suggests, our encounter with the ruin initiates a series of 'partially collapsed dimensions. The past falls into the present, the inside stumbles upon the outside. It is a form of dwelling in space, which is also an act of re-experiencing historical reality' (2013: 158).

The audio and video components of the work support these temporal shifts as the testimonies of citizens reflect on the effects of the bombing on their current experience of living in Hiroshima. In preparing for the work, Wodiczko focused his interest on trauma not only on the effects of the event and the experience of survival, but on the repercussions of memory and the processes of 'postmemory' (Hirsch 1999) as it informs the transmission of traumatic effects from one generation to the next. The citizen's testimonies thus do not always reflect on the direct impact of the historical moment of August 6, 1945, but the historical processes that convey this impact to others within the population of contemporary Japan, and ultimately to the global public at large. The experiences conveyed in the testimonies relate to the hidden ethical, psychological, cultural and political impacts of the bombing, much of which was suppressed by US censorship of testimonies that followed in the years until 1949 after which time official bans were lifted. The testimonies relate to: living with the official justification of the American attack; psychological abuse of second generations from traumatized war veterans; slave labour experienced by Korean immigrants; and stigma against those born in Hiroshima following the bombing and the perception of their 'genetic' threat to society from radiation.

Rather than the conceptual focus of this work being on the return of memory in ways we might associate with the uncanny or traumatic memory, it works with what is still present (the ruin) and the survivors of the bombing as a means of connecting the past to the present and acknowledging this is a coterminous relationship. The audio and video aspects of the work connect subjective experience to the public space of commemoration, but Wodiczko's inclusion of multiple, cross-generational voices also builds a temporal map of traumatic effect through time and extends the scope of subjective trauma across a broader historical, cultural and political landscape. Whilst the work can be said to 'interrupt' public space, it could also be said to interrupt the conceptual field of trauma, something which Wodiczko has commented on as an integral part of the work's political potential and its critical challenge to the practices of democracy. In what may be read perhaps as an anti-traumatic gesture, Wodiczko suggests that through the vocalisation of these effects the work interrupts the continuity of trauma that occupies hidden, silent, or unacknowledged spaces in post-traumatic cultures. He says:

trauma is being transmitted from one generation to another without speech act, without saying what one is hiding inside. That transmission will be going on, so in that sense the interruption of this continuity is one of the ways memorial, this type of work, functions. (Wodiczko in Bruno 2007)

The democratic aspect of the work lies in this interruptive quality, as the different traumatic experiences are relayed such that the concept of trauma, like the building itself is split open and given multiple dimensions. Aligning this unsettled dynamic with the imperative of democracy to remain open to discourse, and to allow citizens to speak of traumatic experiences rather than silencing them, Wodiczko's memorial suggests a reclaiming of 'unclaimed experience' (Caruth 1991) and salvaging it from the inhuman gesture of the bomb. The combined effect of the testimonial narratives and the images of the hands above the water re-humanises the space of trauma and forges an affective link between the processes of memory and democracy.

In an attempt to create a space that connects 'a political ethic with a psychological program' (Phillips 2003:36), Wodiczko comments on the role of subjective testimony in illuminating the failures of democracies to acknowledge the impact of trauma in their paradigms. He says, the victims of trauma

frequently are locked in posttraumatic silence...(where)...(t)here is repression so that certain words cannot be said because particular memory patterns have been shattered...these are the most important speakers in a democracy. They should speak because they have directly experienced its failures and indifference. (Wodiczko in Phillips 2003: 36)

In providing a space where memories can be voiced, such as Lee Sil Gun's of the Hiroshima hospital's refusal to treat a burning Korean man or Kwak Bok Soon's reflections on her inability to speak when confronted with the US justification of the bombing, Wodiczko leads his contemporary audience to a kind of critical form of commemoration that reflects on both the past event of the bombing, as well as the ongoing 'survival' of such fallout effects as discrimination and suppression in the contemporary world. The testimonial narratives of the *Hiroshima Projection* thus provide access to a critical space for the audience to reflect on political paradigms built on trauma, and the importance of undoing or challenging processes that suppress trauma's effects. The fragmented and unsettling effects that are integral to the collapsed architecture of the A-Bomb Dome ruin thus extend to the public space of Hiroshima city in which the projection is staged. They also resonate with a concept of democracy that relates to Claude Lefort's vision of a social order 'instituted and sustained by the dissolution of the markers of certainty' (Lefort 1988:19). In this space, the viewer is asked to bear witness to the workings of traumatic memory and the unveiling or exposing of the failures of democracy that, as Lefort suggests, is essential to its operation. The affective forces of traumatic testimony and the public commemorative act of bearing witness combine in the work to unsettle the relations between past and present in a way that 'inaugurates a history in which people experience a fundamental indeterminacy as to the basis of power, law, and knowledge, and as to the basis of relations between *self* and *other*' (op. cit). Through its fleeting video and audio elements and durational structure, the

Hiroshima Projection unsettles 'History' as the dominant terrain of trauma, and forms a series of powerful, but precarious bonds to the present. Its fragmented testimonies also ask us to bear witness to the fundamental problem of history within trauma, that as Cathy Caruth argues, exposes 'the indissoluble, political bond' (1991: 187) to the histories of others. By combining the effects of the ruin with the fractured experience of the traumatised subject, Wodiczko opens the possibility that 'history, like the trauma, is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's traumas' (Caruth 1991: 192).



Fig. 7: Doris Salcedo *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002) 280 chairs, public installation, Palace of Justice, Bogotá, Colombia.

Like Wodiczko's projection, Salcedo's commemorative work *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002) responds to the democratic imperative to acknowledge the repercussions of trauma and respond to the ethical and political questions raised by the traumatic event. The work was developed by Salcedo, not as a commission, but as her own public intervention to mark the seventeenth anniversary of the 1985 siege of Bogotá's Palace of Justice in which the M-19 guerilla group violently took over the building with the intention of bringing the then Colombian president, Belisario Betancur, to trial and blocking the approval of an extradition treaty he was negotiating with the US government. On the orders of Betancur, the Colombian army responded to the siege after 27 hours of violence, but their response over the course of the second day (November 7) escalated the situation and resulted in more than one hundred deaths, including those of twelve magistrates and the 'disappearance' of eleven

hostages who were staff in the building. In total, the siege and retaliatory assault lasted 53 hours and the Palace of Justice, along with its thousands of legal documents and files was destroyed by army rockets and fire. To this day, the siege remains one of the most discussed and lamented events in Colombia's recent history, associated with the corruptive influences of Colombia's drug cartels on government power and, due to the negligence of trials relating to the event⁶, an example of the failure of the Colombian state to legislate for justice (Acevedo 2011).

In response to the historical details of the siege, Salcedo's work was a durational event that occurred, unannounced to the public, on the anniversary of the siege - the 6th and 7th of November (2002), over the course of 53 hours, the same amount of time in which the original event took place. Staged at the Palace of Justice building in Bogotá's Bolívar Square, the work engaged with the continuity of traumatic effects produced at the site, not only from the 1985 siege, but from the series of politically motivated acts of violence since the first Palace was built in 1921. The current Palace of Justice and the building used by Salcedo, is the third incarnation of the building as the first two were destroyed in different violent incursions in the city. As outlined above, the second building was destroyed during the 1985 siege, and the first was destroyed in the riots of 1948 (known as the Bogotazo) in which the then Colombian president, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, was assassinated, and the ensuing conflicts led to a period of intensive unrest and internal violence (La Violencia, 1948-1958⁷) in Colombia. Although occupying the same civic site as the two former palaces, Salcedo's work does not engage with a ruin, as in Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection*, and is perhaps more in line with Whiteread's memorial in the Judenplatz, with the multi-faceted history of the public square offering a rich symbolic field of concealment and displacement, inaccessible histories and violence. As with both Wodiczko's and Whiteread's works, Salcedo engages with the external dynamics of

⁶ The first and only trial associated with the siege to date was conducted in 2010, some 25 years after the event. The trial recognised the excessive force of the Colombian Army in retaliating against the M-19 group, and resulted in the conviction of retired Col. Plazas Vega to 30 years in prison for the disappearances of 11 people, including members of the cafeteria staff. The case was a landmark in Colombian law as it represented the first conviction of a military commander by the State.

⁷ The 10 year period between 1948-1958 in Colombia is known as 'La Violencia', a period of intense political unrest and civil violence that led to the deaths of more than 200,000 people. During this period, the conflict between Liberal and Conservative Parties was mobilised through paramilitary forces, resulting in a culture of fear and intimidation for the civilian population.

the building as a means of exploring trauma's impact on public history and memory and its interruptive force in public space.

Over the course of 53 hours, the work entailed the lowering of 280 chairs from the roof of the Palace, one by one, so that they hung suspended at different lengths against the external façade of the Palace forming a gradually growing but haphazard cluster (Fig. 7). The number of chairs corresponded to the 'unofficial' number of deaths reported to have resulted from the siege, but denied by the Colombian government, thus marking deaths and disappearances but also silences surrounding the loss of human life. As in much of Salcedo's sculpture, her displacement of domestic furniture and rendering it dysfunctional, signified the displacement of the subject through trauma and the futile loss of life in events of politically motivated violence. In this work however, Salcedo evokes the sense of displacement not through her usual sculptural techniques of splicing or conflating furniture structures and spaces, but through the simpler gesture of interrupting the internal/external architectural boundary and externalising office chairs - objects normally associated with the civic architectural interior - on the outside wall. The singular attention drawn to each office chair over the course of the work, evoked both the individuality of the people who died in the siege, but also as the work progressed, the amassing of individuals that form a community. By displacing the chairs from their usual space inside the building or on the ground, and suspending them in the vertical space around the corner of the building, Salcedo adds a sense of precariousness to their collective effect, evoking an unsettling 'ungroundedness' and interruption to the order of public space and the civilised functioning of the building. As an index of the trauma of the event, the combined effect of unsettling the spatial parameters of the building and displacing its objects, distorts the ordinary and points to 'the trauma around which a particular social reality has been structured' (Moreno 2010: 108).

The suspension of the chairs is a symbolic and spatial move that evokes the trauma of the event through the disruption of internal/external architectural boundaries and

the gradual accumulation of displaced objects over time. The affective power of these strategies combines the enormity of the event reflected in the scale of the building with the precariousness and anonymity of the individual chairs, creating a suspended state of loss for the duration of the work. Such affect interrupts the spaces of the architecture and objects and, as Charles Mengham suggests, displaces the sense of history, such that time is also suspended in the chairs and 'history unravels into an interminable present tense' (2004: 4). The anonymity of the chairs and the lack of any narrative testimony from survivors or the naming of victims or facts, interrupts the dominance of narrative forms in claiming a historical lineage of such trauma, and instead suggests that such violence can interrupt the present at any given time.

Whilst the Palace locates the event firmly in the history of Bogotá's civilian space, the traumatic effect of the externalised chairs on its walls resists presenting such history as contained or containable within any singular structure or form. The impact of externalising the chairs can thus be seen as an interruptive gesture aligned with Rosalyn Deutsche's concept of 'interruptive site specificity' that she suggests constitutes a process of forcing sites 'to testify to the socio-spatial conflicts that they [are] being employed to conceal' (1998: 261). As such, the work is not only commemorative in its temporality and site-specificity, but also bears markers of the counter-memorial and the critique of organized, formal structures of commemoration. Salcedo's externalisation of the effects of trauma on the outside of the building inscribes the palace with loss and silence as the counter-effects of any 'Justice' it may represent. By destabilising the interior/exterior boundary, the work critiques the building as a contained or organised space of justice and excludes the viewer from such a space, relegating them to the outside as witness to its failings and bearer of civic responsibility. The interruptive blurring of spatial and temporal boundaries in *Noviembre 6 y 7* exposes a traumatic space through which we encounter loss and silence. Charles Mengham suggests that it is precisely this aspect of conflation that activates the critical function of art in Salcedo's work and exposes the intolerable nature of trauma. He writes:

The simultaneous experience of a length of time unfolding in the present, and of an equivalent amount of time folded up in the past, is a crucial element in Salcedo's conception of the function of art...The general experience of time is thus one of simultaneous convergence and divergence, at a level and to a degree that a normally functioning society could not tolerate. (2004:2)

One of the key effects of the durational framing of *Noviembre 6 y 7* is a kind of slowing down of violence – a gradual building and suspension of the conditions of trauma such that we, as viewers have time to witness the accruing of its effects in ways that the original event did not allow. Following from the concept that the meaning of trauma is inaccessible at the time of its occurrence, and that this delay is part of trauma's fundamental unrepresentability, the work asks the viewer to bear witness to these conditions of trauma in ways that allow for the building of a communal engagement over time and what Salcedo has suggested is a re-dignifying of the lives of the dead by placing them back in human space. Commenting on her use of repetitive table forms in her more recent exhibition 'Plegaria Muda' (2011), Salcedo says that 'by individualising traumatic experience through repetition' she seeks 'to evoke each death and restore its true dimension to it thus allowing those profane lives to be returned to the sphere of the human' (Salcedo 2011). Through the lowering of chairs in *Noviembre 6 y 7*, this effect of returning the dead to the human sphere mimics a kind of excavation, a refusal to forget or allow their experience to remain invisible and a restorative gesture that invites an empathic communal engagement. Salcedo comments:

it is important for me to locate these pieces out of historical time. So the time for reflection is open for the viewer and for me, both. It is a very important aspect of the work— something that is happening, that remains happening, that will still be there ... a condition that is timeless, that unfortunately repeats every day, that you cannot walk away from. (Salcedo 2010)

In light of this, the public staging of *Noviembre 6 y 7* draws on the democratic potential of public space to invite viewers to engage in rebuilding a sense of community and, like Wodiczko's work, invest in the acknowledgement of trauma as an integral feature of democracy. The political drive behind *Noviembre 6 y 7* and arguably many of Salcedo's other works including *Neither* (2004) and the forerunner to her Bogotá installation, *Tenebrae* (1999-2000), is geared towards the acknowledgement of trauma as both the site of democracy's failure, and through art, its potential restoration.

Salcedo's engagement with the external façade of the building positions the viewer outside the building as a witness to the event's place in history and the impact of trauma within the community. Rather than locating them within the building as an inhabitant, they are addressed as an inhabitant of the city, an occupant of public space and a member of a community. By activating the memory of the siege, the externalised position of the viewer is crucial to how the work 'critically transforms repressive silence into a publicly acknowledged intersubjective engagement with the victims' experiences' (Wong 2007:179). In the absence of any testimonial element, the viewer does not bear witness to the speaking subject, as we do in Wodiczko's work, but to a symbolic field of the experience of trauma in which the durational and spatial elements resist any sense of a whole or finished process. As such it actualises a vulnerability in public space, asking the viewer to bear witness to their own potential anonymity and loss and the present-day possibility of the intervention of another such attack. With each lowered chair, Salcedo reminds the viewer of 'what is lost when an individual is subtracted from the community' (Mengham 2004: 1) and through this temporal dimension also critiques the capacity of history to contain trauma's effects. Salcedo comments on the conflict between trauma and history in relation to her experience of living in the traumatised Colombia:

When you are caught up in a conflict, in precarious conditions, you can't even remember things, never mind produce history. History summarizes, sanitizes and smooths out differences, so that everything appears to have been perfectly synchronized as a unified stance. This is not available to us.

We not only have to deal with economic precariousness but with the precariousness of thought: an inability to articulate history and therefore form a community. (Salcedo in Basualdo 2000:25)

As with Wodiczko's and Whiteread's memorials, the counter-monument tradition informs Salcedo's work to the extent that trauma is presented as destabilising and disempowering, and neither commemoration nor History can offer safely negotiable or inhabitable spaces. Recalling Adorno's legacy it proposes a space for an ethical response to trauma's representation, but also retains an impotence in the face of the past and the silence of lives already lost. The interruptive quality of Salcedo's work in time and space evokes a sense of imposition, reflecting the origins of the violent culture in which the event occurred. She comments on the presence of violence in Colombia:

In a country like Colombia, life is constantly interrupted by acts of violence. There is a reality which is intrusive, that disrupts the way you wish to live. In other words, life imposes upon you this awareness of the other. Violence, horror forces you to notice the Other, to see others' suffering. (op. cit. 13-14)

In light of this, the work fosters a space for an ethical response in which the vulnerability of the other is acknowledged and viewers are asked 'to confront their common humanity with those who are obliterated' (Alzate 2013:6).

Displacing History

All the works discussed in this chapter thus far can be described as historically bound, as the trauma to which they refer is bound to a particular event in history and hence to a particular time and place. As commemorative works, the historical event dictates the site-specificity of the work and the symbolic and political contexts informing it. However, other works by Salcedo and Wodiczko - Wodiczko's *Bunker Hill Monument, Boston* (1998) and *Tijuana Projection* (2001) and Salcedo's *Istanbul Biennale* installation (2003) - make a break from the dominance of recognised historical events by engaging with current traumatic experiences occurring in

contemporary cities or, as in the case of Salcedo's work, by evoking trauma as an anonymous experience unframed by site, event, or culture. These works engage with architectural forms and spaces that are embedded within the spatial and social fabric of the cities in which they appear. Whilst the public siting of these works continues to allude to the collective effects of trauma and public memory, the shift in focus towards traumas of the immediate present, such as civilian murder or racial prejudice, not only breaks with the traditions of recognising only war or mass conflict as publicly commemorative events, but exposes the fundamental uncertainty that underpins democratic relations in the public sphere. In such works, I contend we can find a unique tension that informs democratic processes. In these works, the tension between the 'unrepresentable' spaces of trauma and the 'dissolution of the markers of certainty' (Lefort 1988: 19) exposes the precarious social and economic conditions from which civilian traumas emerge and queries the security of cities and individuals who inhabit them. Their interruptive quality as temporary installations, as distinct from permanent memorials, also works on a political level to question, as Judith Butler has done, why some traumas are allowed public commemoration and others are not, or under what political conditions are some, and not other lives considered 'grievable' (Butler 2004).

Wodiczko's *Bunker Hill Monument, Boston* projection (1998) was staged over three consecutive evenings in September 1998 as part of the Institute of Contemporary Art/Vita Brevis's "Let Freedom Ring" initiative, a project aimed at fostering critical engagements with the twin themes of tyranny and freedom. His projection occurred at the American Revolutionary Monument on Bunker Hill in Charlestown each night, consisting of a thirty-minute projection of audio and video components four times until 10pm. The social focus of the work was on the Charlestown area of northern Boston, which at the time, was suffering the highest rate of unsolved murders in the metropolitan area, with the population subjected to a code of silence that left 74 percent of those murders unsolved between the years 1974 and 1992 (see Saltzman 2006). In a critical gesture against the ideals of freedom symbolised by the Bunker

Hill Monument⁸, Wodiczko's work asked the mothers of children murdered in Charlestown and others affected by the violence to present, via performance, their accounts of its impact on their daily lives. Consisting of an audio track of interview

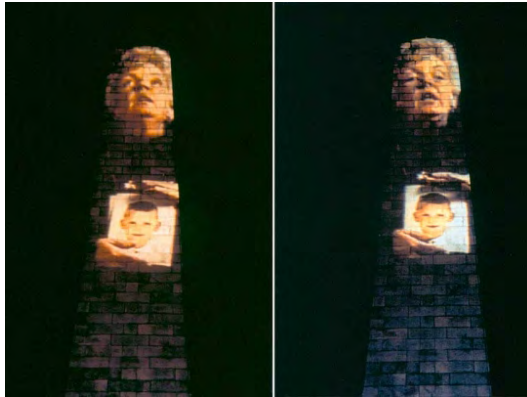


Fig. 8: Krzysztof Wodiczko *Bunker Hill Monument*, Boston (1998) Video projection and sound installation, Bunker Hill Monument, Boston, Massachusetts.

recordings and video projections of the faces and hands of participants holding photographs of their children onto the Bunker Hill Monument (Fig. 8), the power of the work is conveyed by the critical re-inscription of a public, historical monument designed to commemorate 'heroic' war trauma, with the private grief of individuals affected by civilian trauma in the

contemporary city of Boston. As with other monument works, such as his *Homeless* projections (George Washington Monument, Union Square New York, 1986; The Soldiers and Sailors Civil War Memorial, Boston 1987) the *Bunker Hill Monument* projection draws on the history of the counter-monument to critique the monument as a form that commemorates only certain kinds of trauma within narratives of freedom and heroism and conceals other traumatic effects hidden by such narratives. By re-inscribing the monument with the projected faces and stories of parents of children murdered in contemporary Charlestown, Wodiczko not only humanizes the monument but shows it to be vulnerable to re-inscription in the present. Turning our attention to the contemporary city in which the monument stands, Wodiczko exposes 'the monument's traditional meaning as a symbol of the freedom won in the Revolutionary War to make viewers question the meaning of freedom in modern Charlestown' (Purcell 2003: 56).

In creating a symbolic space for contemporary traumas and losses that Wodiczko suggests are no less 'grievable' than war losses and which impact on communities in

⁸ The Bunker Hill Monument commemorates the Battle of Bunker Hill, (June 17, 1775) the first major conflict between British and American forces in the American Revolutionary War. Although the battle is known as "The Battle of Bunker Hill" most of the fighting actually took place on Breed's Hill, where the monument stands today. The monument is a 221-foot granite obelisk that visitors can enter and climb 294 steps inside to reach the top. See <http://www.nps.gov/index.htm>

no less powerful ways, the Bunker Hill work comments on the circumscription of public space and the denial of communities a right to speak of their suffering. The work challenges the enforced code of silence surrounding the murders in Charlestown to which many of the testimonies refer, and gives those affected a space from which to speak. As we have seen with the *Hiroshima Projection*, Wodiczko argues such a gesture is fundamental to participating in democracy. As he comments, '(s)ilence and invisibility are the biggest enemies of democracy...if you cannot speak, none of your other constitutional rights can be exercised' (Wodiczko in Shulman 1998). The democratic imperative of speaking against the ideals presented by Western democracy and exposing its injustices is also a focus in his



Fig. 9: Krzysztof Wodiczko *The Tijuana Projection* (2001) Video projection and sound installation, Centro Cultural de Tijuana, Mexico.

2001 *Tijuana Projection*, a work that unlike the *Hiroshima* and *Boston* works, does not engage with monument forms, but rather the contemporary civic architectural site of Tijuana's Centro building, the city's main arts and cultural centre. Using a similar combination of live audio testimony and video projection as

the *Bunker Hill Monument* projection, the work involved the participation of six women from various generations whose faces were projected onto the building's central spherical structure 'transforming its faceless, silent mass into a manifestation of their presence' (Wodiczko 2003: 4). Produced through a specially designed video and microphonic device attached to their heads (Fig. 9)⁹ the live projection of their enlarged faces and testimonies conveyed an immediate and amplified sense of vulnerability as they reflected on the effects of traumas associated with their socio-economic circumstances in Tijuana. Selected specifically for their experiences as workers in the 'maquiladoras', the large industrial compounds in Tijuana built by foreign companies looking to take advantage of the free trade zone whilst exploiting

⁹ A 9-10 minute edited video of the *Tijuana Projection* is available at <http://video.mit.edu/watch/tijuana-projection-4295/>. Date Accessed 01/07/15

cheap Mexican labour, the women spoke of poor working conditions and dangerous environments and effects such as domestic and sexual abuse, exploitation and police violence. Within the socio-economic framework of Tijuana city, Wodiczko's projection acknowledges these traumas as political as they are both subjects of and 'witnesses to the catastrophe of progress and modern industry' (Wodiczko in Phillips, 2003: 45).

Moving away from History as the governing field of reference for defining trauma, the *Tijuana Projection* utilises a contemporary civic architectural site to frame trauma in the present and confront viewers not only with the disclosure of private trauma in public space, but with a shift away from commemoration as the dominant public forum for bearing witness to trauma. As with the other works discussed in this thesis, the traumatic impact of the projection derives from the interplay between the internal and external spatial dynamics of the work and the juxtaposition of the confessions detailing the interior lives of the women, with the external façade of the building representing institutional structures that support the cultural life of the city. Wodiczko exploits both the formal, anthropomorphic aspects of the building and its geographical position very close to the US-Mexico border, to interrupt the sense of cultural cohesion invested in its arts and cultural activities with subjective accounts of the effects of illegal and exploitative activities within the city at large. Such a strategy harnesses the force of trauma to raise questions about the politics of public space and the structures that support our access to it and our sense of communal cohesion.

Whilst the political impact of the *Tijuana Projection* lies in the disclosure of information that the corporations involved would prefer to suppress, its social impact lies in the confessional nature of the testimonies and the proximity of trauma created by the work between speakers and viewers. Wodiczko's audio-visual device allows the speakers to be both on the building and amongst the audience, such that the space of trauma is located both at the architectural interface of community life - the Cultural Centre building - and in the urban space surrounding it.

I suggest such a dual positioning creates an anxiety about the individual subject in the immediate space of the city and enables a particular kind of empathic engagement with trauma that extends beyond individual response to an extra-subjective space in which our proximity to the traumatised 'other' is literally manifest. Such a shift activates an empathic force that acknowledges the impact of loss within the community and has the potential to bring 'to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorising fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility' (Butler 2004:22). The force of the work extends Adorno's requirement that art after Auschwitz acknowledge the ethical implications of representing trauma beyond the artist and to the community who bears witness to this representation. The ethical demand of the *Tijuana Projection*, like many other of Wodiczko's public works, is thus founded on the power of what Deutsche terms the 'critical image' as it seeks to 'interrupt self-absorption, promoting answerability to the Other, establishing non-indifferent modes of seeing, and thereby developing the experience of being in public' (Deutsche 2010: 67). In shifting the space of trauma from private to public, the work also has the potential to engage the broader question of community cohesion and justice, evoking Lisa Saltzman's proposal 'for a community of strangers as neighbours' (2006:96).



Fig. 10: Doris Salcedo *Installation for the Eighth Istanbul Biennale* (2003) 1,550 chairs, Istanbul, Turkey.

Whilst Wodiczko's *Tijuana Projection* repositions trauma *outside* the framework of History, the use of testimony in the works still retains a specificity of time, place and event in the cultural context of modern day Tijuana. The last work under discussion, Salcedo's *Istanbul Biennale* installation (2003: Fig. 10) relinquishes this cultural specificity altogether and moves another step away from History and towards the creation of an anonymous space of trauma. The work, consisting of a precisely engineered but precarious-looking stack of 1,550 chairs, was

installed in a void between two buildings in the business district of Istanbul, a demolition site that Mieke Bal has suggested references a violation of domestic space for capitalist purposes (see Bal 2010: 219). Salcedo's engagement with architecture in this work is not based on any historical event or trauma directly associated with site. Rather, the architectural dimensions offer a metaphorical platform for staging loss on a large scale and re-inscribing a once inhabitable space as uninhabitable. On a symbolic level, the work derives its traumatic force from the engagement with a space of loss, the irrecoverable nature of the original architecture and the sense of displacement derived from the large number and haphazard appearance of the chairs. The architectural scale of the sculpture, and the sheer number of chairs nearly filling the cavity has also been likened in its formal and symbolic elements to a mass grave (Mengham 2004). As with *Noviembre 6 y 7*, Salcedo's chairs in this work operate as indices of absent subjects, but there is an abiding sense of anonymity and abandonment that differs in tone from the animated, controlled suspension of chairs commemorating the lives of the victims of the 1985 siege. In the Istanbul work, we do not find the same engagement with historical specificity of an event nor the same interplay between interior and exterior space that enabled the sense of displacement in *Noviembre 6 y 7*. Rather, in the absence of a fourth, or front wall that would contain the architectural space, the Istanbul chairs seem to conflate interior and exterior and suggest that such divisions no longer exist. In contrast to the suspended chairs of the Bogota work, which animate the space of memorial as a public event, the inanimate chairs here seem dead, evoking a sense of the aftermath of an event, and impotence for the viewer who has arrived too late. In some ways, the work echoes Whiteread's concerns with filling interior space, casting the viewer out and engaging with loss through a ghostly site of demolition, but there is no trace of inhabitable space here, only inhabitants.

Whilst Salcedo's use of a demolition site to install the work resonates with the political themes of homelessness and the displacement of humanity in her work generally, the anonymous appearance of the chairs generates a particular anxiety about the fate of the subject and the specificity of the event that caused such loss.

Salcedo has stated that whilst the Istanbul work relates to an historical event of war, the work is more about creating a space of uncertainty that reflects how memory can never fully account for the event and shifting our focus away from history or acts of commemoration towards the present and the nature of our shared experience. She states:

what I'm trying to get out of this piece is that element that is common in all of us and I think in a situation of war we all experience it, every human being... I don't think it's important to know the particular event, I'm not narrating a particular story, I'm just addressing experiences. (Salcedo 2010)

The fact that the chairs actually prevent our inhabitation of the space in the work, suggests both that war produces a traumatic collective space and that historical approaches to it are ineffective in producing an account of the experience of occupying such a space. By disarticulating trauma from history, Salcedo opts instead for the geo-spatial metaphor of 'a topography of war' (op. cit) that reflects the symbolic merging of the historical with the contemporary space of the city, or as she puts it 'the point where everyday life began...and war began was intertwined' (op. cit). By engaging with an architectural space that is already evacuated and filling it with chairs, Salcedo foregrounds the relationship between community and loss as an unsettled aspect of our contemporary experience of public space. She claims, '(o)f course, everything happens to us in spatial terms. To place the invisible experience of marginal people in space is to find a place for them in our mind' (Salcedo in Basualdo 2000: 17). The architectural cavity thus becomes a metaphorical space for acknowledging both the presence of trauma in everyday life, and the tensions between community and loss in our collective consciousness.

Through her implied critique of history and memory as the dominant fields of access to trauma, Salcedo's Istanbul work relocates trauma beyond contexts dictated by the past, and brings it into the present. The overwhelming sense of the work is one of vulnerability and a precariousness of the structures of community and the relation of the subject within it. As such, the work suggests an 'other' within the space of

community, perhaps a community unconscious marked by the accumulated appearance of isolated and anonymous 'figures' in the midst of public space. The location of the work between buildings indicates an unsettled boundary between our private and public experience and suggests that 'the experience of being in public' (Deutsche 2010:67) is the current site of vulnerability in our cities and in our relations to each other. The work challenges the limits of commemoration, pushing its ethical requirements beyond the political demands of democracies or of art, and towards the question of our common humanity. As such it seems to point to a form of experience in which our response is bound by

a form of moral outrage that does not depend upon a shared language or a common life grounded in physical proximity. In such cases, we are seeing and enacting the very activity of bonds of solidarity that emerge across space and time. (Butler 2012: 135)

By locating trauma on a border between the spaces of everyday life and war, Salcedo, (as she does with *Shibboleth*) asks us to negotiate a space of danger and bear witness to precariousness as fundamental to our understanding of common humanity. Through these effects, Salcedo's engagement with architecture seeks to reconnect us to a profoundly human space and with architecture's primary goal of building a space for human habitation.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how each of the works destabilises the foundations of historical approaches to trauma by harnessing tensions between the unrepresentability of trauma and an unsettled notion of public space. In the commemorative works we have seen how their architectural dimensions draw on the counter-monument tradition to challenge the idea that traumatic history can be contained in singular forms or processes, and by excluding the viewer from the architectural space, forge connections to the broader dynamics of the site to bring its relevance into the present. The works discussed in the latter section of the chapter present a challenge to the conceptual terrain of History more broadly as a

means of engaging a political critique of trauma in contemporary contexts, and fostering a space in which the immediacy of, and our proximity to trauma might enrich our understanding of our common humanity. The fragile and unsettled conditions of the architectural components of all of the works suggest none of these processes are easy or guaranteed, and point rather to a precariousness that currently attends our social bonds and spaces.

In different ways, all the works raise questions about how trauma informs our experience of the spaces of daily life in our contemporary cities and whether its representation can be incorporated into the way we interact with each other, or as Wodiczko's and Salcedo's works suggest whether it can or should be part of safeguarding our democracies. Such questions are closely aligned with Adorno's legacy and the question of art's capacity to respond to trauma in ways that acknowledge its breach of our humanity and the limitations of any system of representation in approaching the dimensions of this experience. In line with the shifting interior/exterior boundaries in the works, all the works discussed here tread a boundary that acknowledges both the political imperative of making space for trauma in our public spaces and the precarious and vulnerable relations this exposes in relation to our sense of history, and to the suffering of others. As such, the power of the works lies in their seemingly contradictory proposal that representing trauma can both bind and separate us, but that by foregrounding the viewer's spatial experience of the works we might begin to approach this as a public encounter in which we are all implicated. The critique of history in the works thus engages with their political power to suggest that despite the silencing effects of trauma, we must continue to find a space for articulating a politics of trauma or we face the intolerable ethical consequences of not doing so. As Eric Santer argues:

the postmodern destabilisation of certain fundamental cultural norms and notions, above all those dealing with self-identity and community, cannot be understood without reference to the ethical and intellectual imperatives of life after Auschwitz. For if the postmodern is, in a crucial sense, about the

attempt to 'think difference', we take on this task in the knowledge of what can happen if a society turns away from such labors. (1990: xiv)

Whilst the works offer a potentially restorative space built on the ethical demands of a post-Auschwitz world, their fragmented formal parameters create fragile and temporary connections to the present. The fragility of Wodiczko's light projections, the precariously stacked or suspended chairs in Salcedo's works and Whiteread's nameless, ghostly memorial, all maintain a connection to the aporia of trauma. The proximity we experience to the spaces of the works without actually being able to inhabit them, retain a link to concepts of uninhabitable space and reflect deeper anxieties about the fate of the subject in our public spaces and our collective vulnerability. The affective power of these works lies in their precarious vision of public space in which the potential for trauma is ever-present, a space in which the world can be, and in many cases is, already unmade.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that architectural form and space has emerged in recent years as a new platform for exploring the shifting dimensions of trauma in the contemporary world. Through analyses of twelve unique artworks it has offered a critical account of the specific dynamics of architecture in the sculptural and site-specific work of Schneider, Whiteread, Salcedo and Wodiczko and theorized ways in which the works intersect with an expanding field of trauma theory. Engaging with this expanding field, I have argued that the works point to an extrasubjective space in which trauma is rendered as a problem of inhabitation and highlighted a number of conceptual boundaries that currently inform the affective range of trauma as it is increasingly mediated in public space and represented in socio-political contexts. The emphasis on 'unsettling space' throughout the thesis has been a critical strategy in highlighting how the shifting boundaries between public and private space and individual and collective experience reflect contemporary anxieties about loss in our communities and the vulnerability of our social relations. By way of concluding the thesis, I offer summaries of each of the chapter arguments and suggest areas for further reflection, particularly on the broader question of art's role in forging new spaces for considering where and how trauma can be mediated in an increasingly externalized field of relations.

Chapter One opened the discussion by focusing on the private, subjective space of the home and the role of the uncanny in Gregor Schneider's *Haus u r* (and Totes Haus u r installations) (1985-present) and Rachel Whiteread's *Ghost* (1990). I argued that by unsettling interior/exterior architectural boundaries and isolating the room, the spatial dimensions of these works operate like the uncanny to convey a sense of uncertainty about the space of home and its attendant meanings of security, shelter and containment. Locating the works on a trajectory of modern concepts of the uncanny, I focused on how the works convey a series of conceptual displacements that unsettle the viewer's ability to inhabit them and point to the presence of traumatic histories in the public domain. I argued that, as with the nineteenth

century concept, the uncanny in post-modern contexts may be seen as an interruptive and unstable element that not only unsettles our sense of time and place within the work, but through installation also unsettles our experience of the gallery space, subverting its promise of stability and contained representation.

Through a discussion of the displacing effects of installation and the critical openings forged by the uncanny, the latter section drew on Freud's concept of the archaic (2003) to argue that the works not only haunt the gallery interiors they inhabit when installed, but activate an uncanny sense of a former subject or inhabitant whose absence haunts our own experience of the work. In line with Freud's concept, I argued that the installed works connect us to the histories of others but also to a broader question of home and belonging in public space. As such I concluded that the displacing effects of the works point to a kind of traumatic knowledge residing in the public domain, that never reconciles the question of home but rather fulfills Heidegger's concept of the uncanny (2010) and asks us to recognize ourselves as fundamentally 'not-being-at-home' in the world. Whilst it was not possible within the scope of the chapter to fully consider the role of the uncanny in public spaces beyond the gallery, the incorporation of Whiteread's *House* (1993/4) and Schneider's *CUBE* projects (2005-) into the discussion may raise further questions about the regulation of the uncanny in public space and the kinds of social histories considered tolerable within contemporary contexts. The failure of these projects may also point to further conceptual considerations of the interplay between absence and presence within the uncanny and how it may expose the political regulation of art and the politics of community debate and censorship.

The power of architectural forms and spaces to evoke connections to political spaces of trauma was also a focus in Chapter Two which discussed the four works - Schneider's *Weisse Folter* (White Torture, 2007) Whiteread's *Untitled (Room 101)* (2003), Wodiczko's *If You See Something* (2005) and Salcedo's *Shibboleth* (2007). Focusing on how each of the works reference spaces in which trauma is produced by institutional structures of power, I argued that the architectural dimensions of the

works and their installations evoke spaces of division and otherness produced within dominant social and political systems. Extending the interests of Chapter One, my discussion retained a focus on the architectural interior as a contained space in which traumatic affect is figured through an unsettling of interior/exterior boundaries and the difficulties of negotiating such boundaries. Moving on from the uncanny as a site of the self/other division, this chapter focused on the absent other as a politically constituted and traumatised subject in the works, and argued that their unsettled material boundaries evoke the dividing practices associated with power such as surveillance or torture that produce such subjects. Drawing on Salcedo's concept of experience as 'going across danger' and theories of power and division in the work of Foucault (1977) Agamben (1998) and Butler (2004), I theorised the viewer's position as one involving the negotiation of precarious boundaries that subsequently raises ethical questions about our own response to the suffering of others. The chapter concluded by observing that the unsettling effects of these works extends the affective range of trauma beyond the gallery to questions of agency and powerlessness in our current social and political climate. Whilst I suggested the spatial dimensions of the works offer a critical opening for negotiating the politics of trauma, further theoretical reflection on the role of the viewer may consider the implications of post-colonial perspectives on how we theorise our response as members of a global community, and the how we define the specific nature of our ethical obligation in contexts beyond the dominance of Western institutions.

The concerns of the thesis with the gradual externalizing of trauma's effects culminated in Chapter Three with the discussion of memorial works in public space and the challenge they pose to dominant narratives of traumatic history such as the Holocaust. Through analysis of six works, I argued that by engaging with the counter-monument tradition, the works destabilise the foundations of historical approaches to trauma and draw on tensions between the unrepresentability of trauma and present day traumas in civilian contexts to unsettle public space. In relation to the commemorative works – Whiteread's *Holocaust Memorial* a.k.a *Nameless Library*

(2000), Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) and Salcedo's *Noviembre 6 y 7* (2002), I focused on how the unsettled interior/exterior architectural boundaries in the works forges fragile but powerful connections between the past event and the continuation of its effects in the present. My discussion in the second part of the chapter on Wodiczko's *Bunker Hill Monument* projection (1998) and *Tijuana Projection* (2001) and Salcedo's *Istanbul Biennale* (2007) installation extended the concept of an 'unsettled present' to consider how the works relinquish trauma's connection to the past and major historical events, and foster a space for acknowledging and commemorating trauma in contemporary socio-political contexts. Where I aligned the challenges to history in all the works in this chapter to the ongoing relevance of Adorno's legacy, the latter discussion focused in particular on how the works engage with questions of democracy and expose our collective inhabitation of public space as vulnerable. It concluded with a focus on how the fragile and unsettled effects of the works in this chapter have a political force that evokes public space as precarious and asks us to recognize the vulnerability of our current social bonds and spaces.

The focus in Chapter Three on the space of 'common humanity' evoked in works like Salcedo's *Istanbul Biennale* and the approach to public space and democracy as vulnerable sites, involved seeing the viewer as an inhabitant of the contemporary city unmarked by any specific socio-political identity. Whilst the focus of the chapter was limited to theorizing the shift towards contemporary civilian contexts as a challenge to History, further reflection on how the works address us as global civilians may consider how these works can move us beyond the subversive strategies of the counter-monument and towards a space of a global humanitarian ethics for the everyday. As such, further directions for research may consider public art as a space currently being reinvigorated through different modes of ethics, activism and responsibility beyond the political demands of individual nations.

From the recurring concept of the uncanny to the public spaces of memorial, all the works discussed in this thesis indicate the persistence of trauma as a surviving trope

of the twentieth century and convey a range of anxieties about its presence in new and emerging post-modern contexts. By focusing on architectural form and space my discussion has highlighted how each artist offers spatial frameworks for negotiating these anxieties and how a critical reading of architecture can enrich our understanding of the socio-political meanings in their work. The combined effects of trauma and architecture in the works activate a critical space for considering the stability of the spaces in which we live our lives and the social and political conditions 'that make life livable' (Butler 2012:147). Despite differences in approach and medium, all four artists present trauma as an unresolved space that refuses the viewer a safe or comfortable site of inhabitation and highlight the unsettled conceptual boundaries currently attending the expanding theoretical field of the traumatised subject. In their unsettled interior and exterior spaces, and different effects of displacement, disorientation and division, the architectural dimensions of the works are a powerful medium for locating trauma at a threshold between our social and symbolic orders and raising questions about the vulnerability of this threshold in our contemporary world.

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